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GRILLED CHEESE WITH ONION JAM, TALEGGIO, AND ESCAROLE. PAGE 10

FEBRUARY 2008

MEET THE MAN WHO SAW THE FUTURE

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WILLIAM ABRANOWICZ

CONTENTS

GRILLED CHEESE WITH ONION JAM, TALEGGIO, AND ESCAROLE

MAKES 2 SANDWICHES

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 15 MIN

- **4 (½-inch-thick) center slices sourdough bread (from a 9- to 10-inch round)**
- **4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **1½ tablespoons onion or fig jam**
- **12 to 14 oz chilled Taleggio or Italian Fontina, sliced**
- **¼ lb escarole, center ribs discarded and leaves cut crosswise into 1-inch pieces (about 2 cups)**

▸Brush 1 side of bread slices with oil and arrange, oil sides down, on a work surface. Spread jam on 2 slices of bread and divide cheese between remaining 2 slices. Mound escarole on top of cheese and season with salt and pepper, then assemble sandwiches.

▸Heat a dry 12-inch heavy skillet (not nonstick) over medium-low heat until hot. Cook sandwiches, turning once and pressing with a spatula to compact, until bread is golden-brown and cheese is melted, 6 to 8 minutes total.

ON THE COVER SAY GRILLED CHEESE (RECIPE ABOVE).
PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS NILSSON. FOOD STYLING BY PAUL GRIMES.



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ROMULO YANES RECIPE: ANDREA ALBIN FOOD STYLING: PAUL GRIMES PROP STYLING: HALEY THURSHWELL

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- AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE TAKING IT ALL IN, YOU CAN JOIN THE ACTION BY STARTING A CONVERSATION IN ONE OF OUR FORUMS
- SO BE SURE TO STOP BY SOON AND COME BACK OFTEN—THE MENU CHANGES DAILY

LEFT TO RIGHT, FROM TOP: MARCUS NILSSON (2); STEPHANIE PFRIENDER STYLANDER; BROWN W. CANNON III; MARCUS NILSSON; ROMULO YANES; MARCUS NILSSON; GORTA YUUKI

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CLICK, CLICK ... WOW

LOOKING FOR A RECIPE for creamed woodchuck? How about a nice roasted peacock? If we can't interest you in either of those, perhaps you'd like to get the latest news from the world of food science, where revolutionary ideas are being introduced on a daily basis, or read a discussion with author Michael Pollan about the ethics of eating. Also on offer: long-lost essays by our country's finest food writers, such as James Beard, M. F. K. Fisher, Robert P. Tristram Coffin, and Joseph Wechsberg, and a series of short, hilarious videos from some of the world's most exciting chefs.

When we started to cook up the new gourmet.com, which debuted on January 16, we spent a lot of time considering the possibilities. From the start, we knew that we were not interested in creating a digital copy of GOURMET magazine. We wanted gourmet.com to be its own rich and wonderful space, a unique and satisfying experience, one that would be updated every weekday.

The digital world is an amazing place, an infinite sphere that can simultaneously give you all the latest up-to-the-minute news while also stretching back in time. It can be both moving and static, fast and slow. For a magazine like GOURMET, curious about the future, passionate about the present, with deep roots in the past, cyberspace offers incredible opportunities.

We are trying to use them all. Our recent-recipe archives continue to reside on our sister site, epicurious.com, but gourmet .com contains an archive of articles reaching all the way back to the magazine's beginnings, in 1941. While we were perusing old issues, deciding which articles to put online, we couldn't help spending time with some of our older recipes; many, like that creamed woodchuck, offer a fascinating glimpse into a long-gone world. At times we found ourselves laughing out loud, saying "Listen to *this*" and reading old recipes to each other because they are so weirdly wonderful, and when that happened, we thought that you would want to read them, too. My favorite, Hollywood Macaroni Suprême, from 1941, contains ground lamb, anchovies, Swiss cheese, and shredded, blanched almonds mixed with "two dozen balls the size of a walnut, made from a pound of fine liverwurst." You'll find it at gourmet.com for your amusement.

But while the past is fascinating, it is the now, the right this minute, that the digital realm does best. The world of food is changing at a furious pace, and you can keep up with it at gourmet.com, where news on the politics of the plate, government legislation that affects how we eat, reports from farmers and factories, is constantly updated. The food world now has its very own celebrities, and we are covering them as well.

In addition, our correspondents in cities all around the globe are sending us daily dispatches, so when a restaurant opens in London, Los Angeles, or Shanghai, you'll be the first to know. You'll also be hearing from great writers like Ann Patchett and Laura Shapiro, and from chefs like Eric Ripert and Heston Blumenthal, who will be writing for us regularly.

The new gourmet.com also has guides to tell you where to shop, eat, and sleep in cities around the world. We're starting off with New York, Paris, and Montreal, but we'll be building the archives every month, and we'll have a whole roster soon.

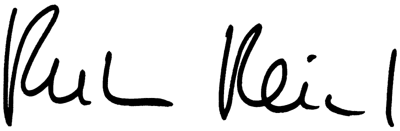
But the most exciting part of gourmet.com—in my opinion, at least—is our new video department. Our in-house video producer has been busy shooting great moments in our test kitchens, as well as turning her camera on chefs like Marco Pierre White ("White Hot," page 82), who visited our offices last month. In her spare time, she has been off ferreting out intriguing material in markets and kitchens all over.

Our digital world also includes *Gourmet's Diary of a Foodie*, which airs on public-television stations across the nation. Shot in many different countries, the show looks at culture food-first; season two began earlier this month, but if you missed season one, you can find full episodes at gourmet.com, along with recipes from both seasons.

So even if you're not looking for a recipe for creamed woodchuck, I hope you'll come visit us at gourmet.com very soon. It's a whole new world.

WE FOUND OURSELVES LAUGHING OUT LOUD, SAYING 'LISTEN TO THIS' AND READING OLD RECIPES TO ONE ANOTHER BECAUSE THEY ARE SO WEIRDLY WONDERFUL.





RUTH REICHL EDITOR IN CHIEF

BRIGITTE LACOMBE

FEBRUARY

UP FIRST

Ah … breakfast in bed. Everything just seems to taste better when it's served to you on a tray. But aren't these caviar and salmon blini tortes (page 129) a tad over-the-top—and a bit labor-intensive—even for Valentine's Day? Not if you've ever made pancakes or egg salad. For faster, less fussy blini, we've ditched the yeast in favor of an egg white that's been beaten to voluptuousness and then folded into the batter. Blini are typically served with caviar or salmon—but why settle for one, when you can have them both? As a counterpoint to these two salty elements—and with a nod to the egg mimosa that often accompanies caviar—we've added a simple egg salad that's prepared with sour cream instead of mayonnaise. The sweet tang of the sour cream is an ideal complement to the earthy tang of the buckwheat blini. So go ahead and put a lot of effort into spoiling that special someone—or at least make it look like you did. —Lawrence Karol



ROMULO YANES RECIPE: LILLIAN CHOU FOOD STYLING: PAUL GRIMES PROP STYLING: HALEY THURSHWELL

LETTERS

When it comes to rice pudding, skin is in; thinking twice about Kobe beef; memories of a childhood in Britain; authentically delicious Scottish scones; and a versatile apricot spread.

LIKE JANE BRADLEY (Letters, December 2007), I spent my childhood in the United Kingdom, and I'm a huge fan of baked-in-the-oven rice pudding. The recipe following her letter sounds just wonderful—except for the direction at the end to "discard skin from puddings." Oh no you don't! That browned skin is the most delicious part of the dessert, and as children we used to fight over it. (We sometimes still do!)

SARAH JOHNS
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

THANK YOU FOR SHINING A LIGHT on the reality of life for cattle destined to become Kobe beef ("Raising the Steaks," December 2007). Mr. Estabrook was gentle about presenting his facts—no preaching, no strident tones—and I expect that I am not the only reader who appreciates the education and will choose to eat other beef in the future.

BETSY SLINEY
HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA

IT WAS A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE to stumble across John Haney's essay "Stranger Than Paradise" in your December issue, as my family spent the war years in Coopersale Common, located a stone's throw from Ongar. My mother sometimes took my brother and me to Bournemouth (always with detailed admonishments as to behavior), and I recall being just as amazed as Mr. Haney was at the cutlery and table settings in a quite aristocratic household there. Thank you for brightening my day and bringing back many good memories.

VIVIENNE M. CAMPBELL
MT. EPHRAIM, NEW JERSEY

ONE OF MY MOST TREASURED recipes is for my Scottish mother's scones, which evoked fond memories of her childhood in Lanark. I recall hearing her lament the profusion of recipes for oven-baked scones. "Real scones," she would say, "are made on a griddle; most people did not own ovens when I was a girl."

BRIGID O'DONNELL
MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

MARY HEARTY BYE'S SCOTTISH SCONES

MAKES 1 DOZEN SCONES
ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 45 MIN

Perfectly textured inside and out, these scones truly are the real deal. Just a touch of butter or your favorite jam is all the embellishment they need.

- **2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 teaspoons sugar**
- **2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **½ teaspoon baking soda**
- **½ teaspoon cream of tartar**
- **2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch pieces**
- **1 cup well-shaken buttermilk**
- **1 large egg, beaten**
- **Vegetable oil for greasing**

EQUIPMENT: a large griddle (preferably cast-iron) or a 10-inch cast-iron skillet

▸Whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and cream of tartar in a large bowl, then blend in butter with your fingertips or a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in buttermilk and egg with a fork just until a soft dough forms.

▸Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface. With lightly floured hands, divide dough into thirds and knead each piece 3 or 4 times. Pat each piece into a 6-inch round (½ inch thick), then cut each round into 4 wedges.

▸Heat griddle over low heat until hot, then lightly oil.

▸Working in 2 batches, dust each wedge of dough with flour, patting off excess, then cook over low heat, undisturbed, 3 minutes. Increase heat to medium-low and cook until puffed and undersides are golden-brown, 3 to 5 minutes more. Turn scones over and cook until undersides are golden-brown, 6 to 8 minutes (watch closely; move scones and adjust heat as needed so they cook through without burning). Turn scones on edges and cook until golden-brown, about 1 minute per edge. Cut one scone open to check for doneness.

▸Transfer to a rack and cool to warm. (Lightly oil griddle between batches.)

MY VERY DEAREST FRIEND, Faye Stewart (San Francisco's first TV cook), turned me on to GOURMET back in the 1950s, and I've enjoyed the magazine ever since. I'd like to share this recipe for my apricot spread with your readers.

NADINE HELEN CONLY
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

APRICOT SPREAD

MAKES ABOUT 1⅓ CUPS
ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 1½ HR (INCLUDES COOLING)

This simple apricot-based condiment tastes as bright and sunny as it looks. Spread it on toast like a homemade jam, stir some into yogurt or a vinaigrette, or use it as a filling for white or génoise layer cakes.

- **½ lb dried apricots, preferably California (1½ cups)**
- **¾ cup dry white wine**
- **½ cup water**
- **¼ cup sugar**
- **2 (3-inch) strips lemon zest**
- **1½ teaspoons dark rum**

▸Bring apricots, wine, water, sugar, zest, and a pinch of salt to a boil in a small heavy saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring until sugar has dissolved. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until liquid is reduced and very syrupy and apricots are very soft, about 15 minutes if using California (about 45 minutes if using Turkish). (If apricots are not yet softened, pour in an additional ¼ cup water and continue cooking.)

▸Remove from heat. Discard zest, then stir in rum. Transfer apricot mixture to a bowl and cool slightly, stirring occasionally, about 45 minutes.

▸Purée in a food processor until mixture is very smooth. Add water to purée if necessary to achieve a spreadable consistency.

▸Serve at room temperature or chilled.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU
Send your letters to feedback@gourmet.com. All letters and recipe submissions become the property of GOURMET and may be edited, published, or otherwise used in any medium.

YOU ASKED FOR IT

Sophisticated takes on two warming winter classics: an indulgently creamy mushroom macaroni and cheese and a short-rib-spiked French onion soup.

SINCE MOVING to Kingston, New York, I'm missing my favorite comfort food served by Brooklyn's ChipShop. Could you please get the recipe for their wild-mushroom mac and cheese?

SHARON VAIRAMIDES
KINGSTON, NEW YORK

WILD-MUSHROOM MACARONI AND CHEESE

Adapted from ChipShop
SERVES 6 TO 8
ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 HR

Fragrant mushrooms and a sharp Cheddar sauce turn this kids' favorite into a one-dish dinner with grown-up appeal.

FOR MUSHROOMS

- **1 oz dried porcini mushrooms (1 cup)**
- **1 cup boiling-hot water**
- **2 medium leeks (white and pale green parts only), chopped**
- **2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **1½ cups sliced fresh shiitake caps**
- **2 cups trimmed sliced fresh cremini mushrooms**
- **½ cup diced fresh portobello mushroom caps**
- **⅔ cup dry white wine**
- **1 cup heavy cream**

FOR MACARONI AND CHEESE

- **½ lb elbow macaroni (2 cups)**
- **3 cups whole milk**
- **3 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **5 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
- **½ teaspoon dry mustard**
- **5 cups coarsely grated sharp Cheddar (¾ lb), divided**

MAKE MUSHROOMS: Soak porcini in boiling-hot water, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 15 minutes.

▸Meanwhile, wash leeks (see Tips, page 130).

▸Strain porcini through a paper-towel-lined sieve into a bowl, reserving liquid. Squeeze liquid from mushrooms into sieve, then rinse mushrooms well to remove any grit and chop.

▸Cook leeks in butter in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Increase heat to high, then add all mushrooms, reserved soaking liquid, and wine and boil, stirring occasionally, until mushrooms are softened, about 5 minutes. Strain through cleaned sieve into a liquid measuring cup, pressing hard on and reserving mushrooms.

▸Return liquid to skillet and boil until it is reduced to ⅓ cup, about 5 minutes. Add cream and boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 3 minutes. Add mushrooms, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and boil, stirring, 1 minute. Transfer to a 3-quart shallow baking dish.

MAKE MACARONI: Preheat oven to 400°F with rack in middle.

▸Cook macaroni in a pasta pot of boiling salted water (1½ tablespoons salt for 3 quarts water) until al dente. Drain and rinse with cold water to stop cooking, then drain again.

▸Meanwhile, heat milk in a small heavy saucepan over medium-low heat until hot.

▸Melt butter in a heavy medium pot over medium-low heat, then whisk in flour and cook, whisking, 3 minutes. Whisk in hot milk, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and boil over medium heat, whisking constantly, 2 minutes, then whisk in 3 cups cheese until melted. Remove from heat and stir in macaroni and 1½ cups cheese. Spread over mushrooms.

▸Sprinkle evenly with remaining ½ cup cheese. Bake until golden, about 30 minutes.

WHEN OUR RESERVATIONS were not honored around the corner, the culinary gods were watching and sent three southern girls to the door of The Harrison, in New York City. Chef Brian Bistrong's onion soup had an incredible depth of flavor. Can you please get the recipe?

KATHIE DEGARMO
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

BEEFY ONION SOUP

Adapted from The Harrison
SERVES 6
ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 2¾ HR

Adding a short rib to already richly flavored onion soup sets this version of the French classic apart from all the others you've tried.

FOR SOUP

- **1 (¾-lb) beef short rib**
- **1 tablespoon canola oil**
- **3 large Spanish onions (3 lb), thinly sliced**
- **1 garlic clove, smashed**
- **½ cup Madeira**
- **8 cups chicken stock (see gourmet.com), or 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth plus 2 cups water**
- **1 thyme sprig**
- **1 Turkish or ½ California bay leaf**

FOR TOASTS

- **1 (10-inch) piece of baguette**
- **1 tablespoon olive oil**
- **¼ teaspoon chopped thyme**
- **¼ lb Brebis Pyrénées (sheep's-milk cheese), grated (1½ cups)**
- **1 tablespoon chopped chives**

MAKE SOUP: Pat short rib dry, then lightly season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large heavy pot over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then brown short rib on all sides, 5 minutes total. Transfer to a plate.

▸Add onions, garlic, and 1 teaspoon salt to pot and cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are very soft and a brown crust forms on bottom of pot, about 30 minutes. Add Madeira, stirring and scraping up crust, then add stock, thyme, bay leaf, 1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper, ½ teaspoon salt, and short rib with any juices from plate and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until short rib is very tender, about 2 hours.

▸Discard bay leaf and thyme. Shred meat from short rib with 2 forks (discard bone and gristle), then return to pot. Season soup with salt and keep warm, covered, over low heat.

MAKE TOASTS WHILE SOUP SIMMERS: Preheat oven to 325°F with rack in middle.

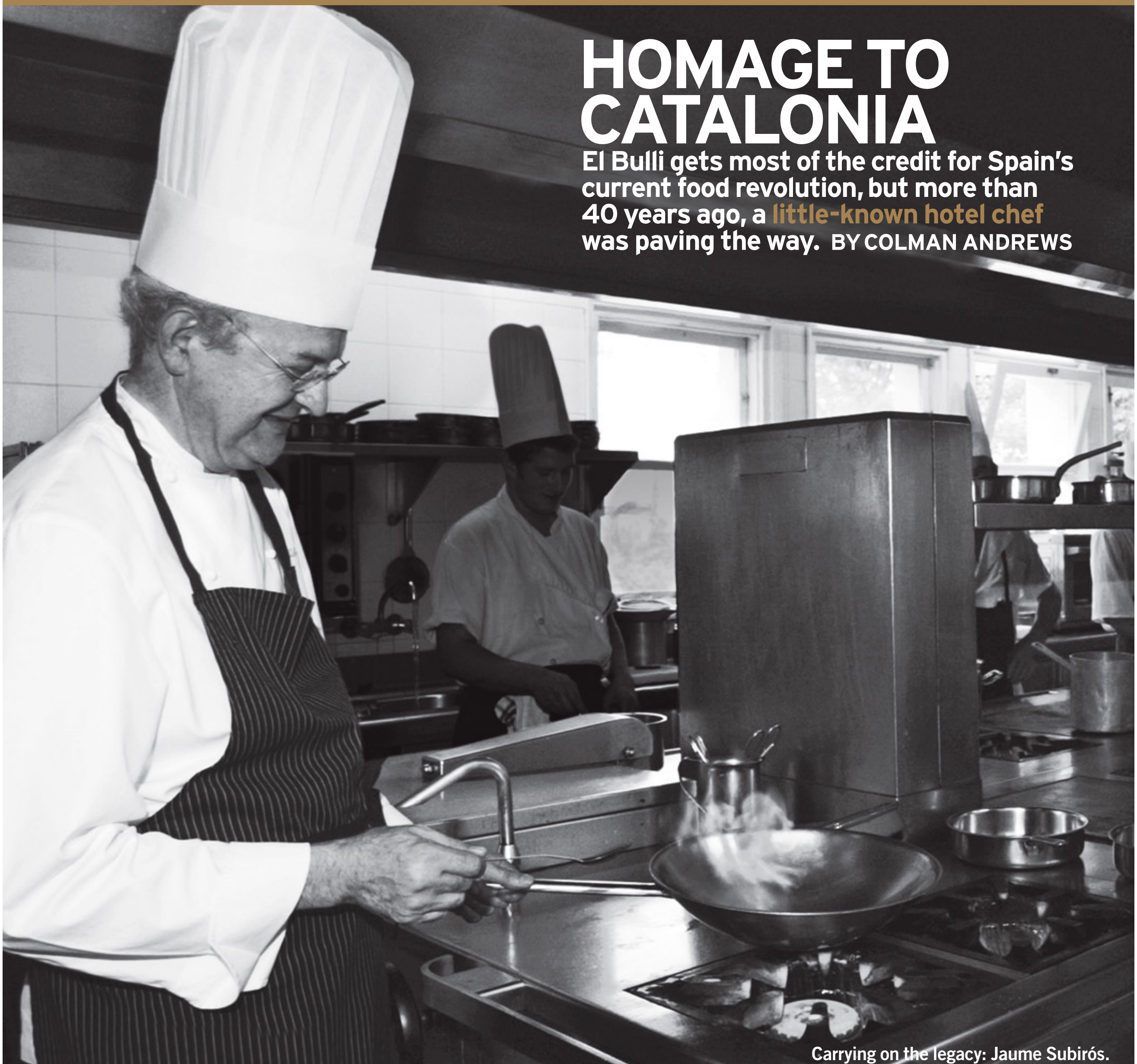
▸Halve baguette crosswise, then cut each half lengthwise into 3 (¼-inch-thick) slices, transferring to a baking sheet. Brush both sides of bread with oil, then sprinkle with thyme and a pinch of salt. Bake until pale golden and dry, about 25 minutes.

▸Preheat broiler. Sprinkle toasts evenly with cheese and broil 3 to 4 inches from heat until cheese is melted and toast is golden in some spots, 1 to 2 minutes.

TO SERVE: Ladle soup into bowls and sprinkle with chives. Serve with toasts.

MENU

restaurants: reviews and trends



HOMAGE TO CATALONIA

El Bulli gets most of the credit for Spain's current food revolution, but more than 40 years ago, a little-known hotel chef was paving the way. BY COLMAN ANDREWS

Carrying on the legacy: Jaume Subirós.

The most influential and revered temple of haute cuisine in Europe today is almost certainly El Bulli, Ferran Adrià's revolutionary restaurant near Roses, just below the French border in the Catalan region of Spain. Fifteen miles or so inland from El Bulli, though, is another restaurant that was almost as revolutionary back in the 1960s—a restaurant whose cooking paved the way for the innovations of El Bulli and all those other daring contemporary Catalan establishments that everybody's talking about these days. That restaurant is the dining room at the Hotel Empordà (originally the Motel Ampurdán), a roadside hostelry in the town of Figueres, birthplace of Salvador Dalí, opened in 1961 by a chef named Josep Mercader i Brugués.

Born into a family of fishermen in the seaside town of Cadaqués, Mercader started young, apprenticing at

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF HOTEL RESTAURANT EMPORDÀ





FOR CREMA CATALANA (CRÈME BRÛLÉE), MERCADER HAD THE INSPIRATION OF PROCESSING IT, CARAMELIZED-SUGAR TOPPING AND ALL, IN AN ICE CREAM MAKER.

Catalonia's Hotel Empordà has plenty of places to relax, but the real action is in the dining room.

local restaurants, often under French-trained chefs. As he grew confident in his cooking, says Mercader's son-in-law and successor, Jaume Subirós, "he began to think about creating a different cuisine." He was encouraged in this pursuit by a group of cosmopolitan friends, chief among them the prominent local writer Josep Pla—who, says Subirós, "liked things a little out of the normal" (as did, of course, Pla's friend Dalí, an early customer of Mercader's).

"Mr. Mercader loved simple dishes and products," says Subirós, a tall, soft-spoken man with an elegant bearing and a reticent smile who refers to his father-in-law in terms of respect bordering on awe. "He modernized and refined a heavy popular cuisine. A perfect example is his *faves a la menta*. The traditional dish of *faves a la catalana* is made with mature fava beans cooked for a long time, with blood sausage and bacon added. Mr. Mercader reconceived it as a salad of small fresh favas—he only made it in the spring, when they were in season—flavored with mint, and in place of rich blood sausage, he used only a few shreds of ham and bits of pig's foot."

Among his other innovations, Mercader turned *samfaina*, the Catalan ratatouille, into a rosy-hued, complexly flavored sauce for roast loin of veal; made a surprisingly delicate mousse out of *escalivada* (eggplant, red peppers, and onions charred in the embers of a fire); recast straightforward roasted salt cod with *allioli* (the basic Catalan garlic-and-olive-oil emulsion) by topping the fish with a souffléd-garlic mousseline; played off the "*mar i muntanya*" ("sea and mountain"—i.e., surf-and-turf) dishes of traditional Catalan cooking by stuffing roast lamb leg with the anchovies of his hometown of Cadaqués; and had the inspiration of processing *crema catalana* (crème brûlée), caramelized-sugar topping and all, in an ice cream machine (this was perhaps his most copied dish).

In other words, long before other Catalan chefs started experimenting with centrifuges and vaporizers, liquid nitrogen and calcium chloride, Mercader was thinking about ways to transform the dishes he grew up with, retaining—and in some cases clarifying and/or intensifying—their flavors while deftly altering their forms. There's no telling what greater influence he might have had on the cuisine of his region, and of Spain in general, if he hadn't died suddenly of a heart attack in 1979.

Fortunately, Jaume Subirós was there to carry on his work. In fact, he has been there since the beginning. Back in 1961, when Mercader was about to open his place, he stopped one day at a farmhouse in the village of Vilamalla, a few miles south of Figueres, and asked for permission to paint a sign for the establishment on a wall that faced the road (a common practice in pre-billboard Spain). The man of the house said yes—on the condition that Mercader give his young son a job. Thus, at the age of 11, Subirós went to work for Mercader, first as a bellboy during the summer and on holidays, later as a full-time employee in the kitchen and dining room. He went on to help run a second Mercader hotel, the Almadraba Park, in nearby Roses, and, in 1974, to marry the boss's daughter, Anna María. For the next five years, he spent summers in Roses and winters working in hotels and restaurants in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Holland. Upon Mercader's demise, he came back home to stay and took over both hotels.

I ATE MY FIRST-EVER MEAL IN CATALONIA at the Hotel Empordà, in 1985, stopping there as I drove down from France to Barcelona. The dining room has been freshened up since then but otherwise hasn't changed much. It's a handsome space, with reddish terrazzo floors, pale yellow walls, and, as a centerpiece, a shiny wing-shaped wooden stand on which are arrayed an assortment of condiments, an *ibérico* ham clasped in a *jamonero* (the wood-and-metal ham holder ubiquitous in Spain), and trays of rustic house-made rolls. (This is also where captains mix the restaurant's popular steak tartare, not on the menu but well worth asking for.) The tables are set with pale yellow linens, graceful glassware, and heavy hotel silver (most hot dishes are brought out *sous cloche*). At one end of the room, a picture window looks out onto the Pyrenees in the distance.

If the dining room is much the same as it was 20-some years ago, the menu isn't quite. While Subirós—who spends his mornings cooking before emerging to oversee the dining room—continues to serve popular Catalan specialties like meat-stuffed *canelons* (cannelloni) in cream sauce and sea bream oven-roasted on a bed of thin-sliced potatoes, as well as a number of Mercader's creations, he also constantly extends the repertoire, recasting familiar regional ingredients and dishes into new forms, just as his father-in-law did. He combines pigs' feet and snails, two common ingredients in the baroque multi-ingredient stews of the region, in a complexly flavored terrine. He makes a "paella" not with rice but with lentils and ornaments it with tiny, vividly fresh scampi. But the biggest change in the menu, says Subirós, is that (Continued on page 128)







A LITTLE CHILI IN KANSAS

For half a century, one of America's most satisfying lunches has been made on a four-burner stove in Topeka. It's a different kind of fast food. BY JANE AND MICHAEL STERN

THE PERSISTENT VOICE FROM OUR CAR'S GPS sounded like that of a prim librarian having a nervous breakdown. "Recalculating … recalculating … recalculating." Our overtaxed digital assistant directed us to one dead end after another at the railroad tracks separating downtown Topeka from the isolated enclave known as Little Russia. We were trying to get to **Porubsky's Grocery**, on the other side of the Santa Fe right-of-way, where tall grain elevators loom over a neighborhood of modest wood-frame homes. The grocery is in a weather-beaten building, the only retail business on what some might call the wrong side of the tracks. No traveler would ever find it by accident, but for the truly committed chilihead Porubsky's is not just a place to eat. It is a destination in itself.

The chili is a fine bowl of heartland comfort. On a cool day, Charlie Porubsky will grind some 80 pounds of chuck in the morning and cook it with a judicious measure of chili powder and other spices, then add the meat to a battered old pot of simmering beans. Dished up in a disposable bowl, it is a very satisfying lunch. What transforms it into irresistible temptation and one of the most unusual chilis anywhere is an application of Porubsky's unique garnish. Charlie Porubsky Sr., who died ten years ago, began making horseradish pickles even before his son Charlie started to apprentice in the kitchen at the age

The sign outside doesn't scream, but the chili, served here with crackers, alongside a lunch tray, sure does; Charlie Porubsky Jr. at work.

MARCUS NILSSON

of 12. Charlie Jr., now 50, is happy to share his father's simple recipe: dill pickles steeped in brine, with hot horseradish, Tabasco sauce, and powdered mustard. The result is ferocious: a boldface, large-font, screaming-red exclamation point for that otherwise gentle dish of protein and starch.

The custom is to scatter a mess of chopped pickles on top of the chili along with crumbled Lance crackers to cushion the pickles' heat. The beef-bean-pickle combo is nothing like chili in Texas or Cincinnati or anywhere else: meaty, thick, and shot through with a devilish pucker that leaves careless novices gasping for air after a couple of mouthfuls.

Chili is strictly a cold-weather dish at Porubsky's, sold from October to the end of March, but Charlie makes and sells pickles year-round. From April through September, they accompany lunch trays, which are the humblest meals imaginable, costing all of $2.98. (Chili also goes for $2.98.) At about nine o'clock each morning, Charlie's mother, Lydia, sits down at a long table in the taproom and prepares 100 plates, each one arrayed with a selection from a cold-cut repertoire of ham, salami, turkey, honey loaf, ham-and-cheese loaf, and barbecue loaf, plus American cheese, Pepper Jack, and Swiss cheese: four meats, two cheeses, every day. Her arrangements are meticulous. "See, this is a tray," she tells a stranger, holding out a Styrofoam rectangle topped with a lovely mosaic of meat and cheese. Using a tightly rolled piece of ham for a pointer, she indicates its highlights. "You put your regular pickles here, your hot pickles here, two whites and two wheats here." Lunch trays are the only entrée on the menu when it isn't chili season. Side dishes are limited to macaroni salad, potato salad, baked beans, and bags of chips. For dessert, a small assortment of candy bars is available.

No chili is served on Friday, because that has always been the day when the Porubsky family unloads trucks to stock the shelves; besides, Friday is when people come to shop for weekend groceries. Porubsky's is so small that lunch customers can sometimes get in shoppers' way. The grocery store is only two tight aisles overflowing with canned goods, cereal, detergent, fruit, and vegetables. At the back is a butcher counter, its glass case filled with lunch meats and cheeses. Behind it is the white-enamel, four-burner gas stove on which chili has been made for customers since the 1950s, when Charlie Sr.'s mother, Catherine, originally offered some to a man who came in for a bologna sandwich, got a whiff of what she was making for the family's lunch, and talked a bowlful out of her. Soon the word began to spread. Bypassed by urban planning and on the road to nowhere, the little neighborhood grocery store became a destination for blue- and white-collar workers on their lunch hour, for politicians eager to meet ordinary citizens, and even for passing trainmen with 15 minutes to spare.

Through a narrow door to the right of the butcher counter, a carpeted step leads down into a wood-paneled taproom where lunch is served. It feels even more cramped than the adjoining grocery, its tables, booths, and bar sandwiched between a low ceiling and a concrete floor. Booths are tight, and the benches that flank a pair of communal tables can hold four big Kansans or perhaps six regular-size folk each. Maximum capacity of Porubsky's dining room is no more than three dozen people, and at the height of chili season it is not unusual for devotees to start arriving at 10:30, a half hour before lunch is served. Orders are taken as soon as customers are seated; the food arrives in less than two minutes.

You can drink beer or soda pop, but one beverage not available at Porubsky's is coffee. "We had to stop serving it," Lydia explains. "The women would eat a bowl of chili, then sit and sip their coffee, sit and sip, while men were standing outside waiting to come in for lunch." Now, no one lingers more than 30 minutes for a meal in this busy place. Proper etiquette is to eat fast, then vacate your seat so someone else can sit down.

While you can buy all the pickles you want in pint, quart, and gallon containers—and they are dandy eye-opening snacks for bold-tongued road trippers—orders of take-out chili are limited by the capacity of Charlie's grandmother's stove. "We don't like to sell more than twenty-five pints to any one person," Charlie says. "It's not fair to people waiting in line for lunch to cut it short like that. Even during cold or rainy chili weather, when we might make fifty gallons or more, we can run out before everyone gets fed."

PORUBSKY'S GROCERY
508 N.E. Sardou Ave., Topeka, KS
(785-234-5788)





RESTAURANTS

The places we're talking about—and making reservations at—this month

BOSTON: It's hidden down an alley in the Leather District, the room is brick-walled industrial chic, and the prices are astronomically high. So far, so okay. But the food at **o ya** trumps everything. Chef Tim Cushman lays out Asian-inspired postmodern dishes you won't find anywhere else: Kumamoto oysters with watermelon pearls and cucumber mignonette; broiled eel with Thai basil and fresh *sansho*; wild bluefin *chutoro* tartare with ginger-kimchi *jus*. The cooked dishes are slightly less sensational than the *nigiri* and sashimi, but all in all it's an experience that reminds you how much fun eating at a restaurant can be. *9 East St. (617-654-9900).*

LONDON: Often cited as one of the best, most original restaurants in London, Fergus Henderson's St. John has had various spin-offs over the years, but none as polished as Notting Hill's new **Hereford Road**, helmed by former St. John chef Tom Pemberton. Top-flight British ingredients—everything from dandelion greens to sand eels—are employed in a menu that changes daily and features simple, satisfying British new-wave fare like sweetbreads with green beans and mint, and a plate of "sprats" (smoked sardines to you and me). *3 Hereford Rd. (020-7727-1144; herefordroad.org).*

LONDON: French-born chef Claude Bosi and his wife, Claire, have transplanted their *Michelin*-two-star **Hibiscus** from its former digs in the Welsh Marches to London's Mayfair. Along with almost the entire staff, Bosi's mastery of improbable flavors—suckling pig's richness is beautifully contrasted with raw *uni*'s briny intensity, while caramelized pig's head finds a foil in yellowfin tuna—has made the transition seamlessly. *29 Maddox St. (020-7629-2999; hibiscusrestaurant.co.uk).*

LOS ANGELES: Around the corner from his West Hollywood restaurant, Sona, David Myers has opened **comme Ça**, a traditional French brasserie. Vintage French photos frame the black-and-white dining room, where Myers and co-chef Michael David turn out all the classics: *frisée aux lardons*, escargots, and terrific duck confit with braised red cabbage. Dessert comes from Myers's pastry shop, Boule, which is so close that the chef can frequently be seen skateboarding to and fro. *8479 Melrose Ave. (323-782-1178; commecarestaurant.com).*

MINNEAPOLIS: What happens when a New York power chef moves to the Midwest and opens a neighborhood vest-pocket restaurant? With any luck, **Heidi's**. Once a sous-chef at Jean Georges, in Manhattan, chef-owner Stewart Woodman is now offering his classic cuisine in a more casual setting. But dishes like shockingly tender poached pheasant with clove *jus* are no less impressive—or delicious—in the new space. *819 W. 50th St. (612-354-3512; heidismpls.com).*

WASHINGTON, D.C.: Though "culinary director" Eric Ripert returned to New York barely a week after opening **Westend Bistro**, in the Ritz-Carlton, he left it in the extremely capable hands of former Le Bernardin sous-chef Leonardo Marino. Tender fried calamari and crab cakes worthy of Ripert's seafood credentials are just the start. Don't miss the grown-up alphabet soup, rave-worthy veal cheeks, and desserts like salted caramel pudding. *The Ritz-Carlton Hotel, 1190 22nd St., N.W. (202-974-4900; westendbistrodc.com).*

In London, Hereford Road's Tom Pemberton, a St. John alum, has the look. In L.A., comme Ça manages to feel warm and sleek at the same time.

FROM LEFT: DANNY ELWES; ERHARD PFEIFFER

GOOD LIVING

tastes tools gifts travel trends shopping cookbooks



Ever wonder why Pez dispensers look so much like

ZIPPOS?

They were invented by an Austrian and marketed with mints to help adults quit smoking.



IN SOUTH KOREA,

VALENTINE'S DAY LASTS FOR 60 DAYS.

ON FEBRUARY 14, WOMEN GIVE MEN CHOCOLATES; THE MEN RECIPROCATE IN MARCH. LONELY BACHELORS HAVE TO WAIT ANOTHER MONTH TO CELEBRATE—BY EATING NOODLES TOGETHER IN MID-APRIL.

The candlefish, a type of smelt, contains so much oil during **SPAWNING SEASON** that it can be dried and used as a candle.

Brazil's Carnaval stems from a Portuguese colonial tradition called

ENTRUDO,

in which merrymakers threw flour, itching powder, soot, and wax lemons at each other.

VODKA SHOTS were Stalin's drink of choice at the 1945 Yalta conference (despite FDR's offer of a gin Martini). Although vodka was virtually unheard of in the U.S. at the time, post-conference sales of the spirit soared.



In medieval Europe, lovers gave each other sprigs of **YARROW** at the beginning of Valentine's Day dinner. If they wilted by the end of the meal, the love affair was doomed.

IN A NEW TREND, BRITISH FARMERS ARE NAMING THEIR COWS AFTER

CELEBRITIES,

WITH MADONNA, DENZEL, AND POSH AMONG THE MOST POPULAR BOVINE MONIKERS.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ©PEZ; ROMULO YANES (2)



COUTURE FOR CUPCAKES

Sporting spirited designs ranging from snowflakes to cowboy boots, these fashion-conscious paper skirts take your muffins and cupcakes from drab to fab ($14 for 10 at fancyflours .com, where you'll also find vintage wedding-cake toppers, 3-D cookie cutters, and transfer sheets so stylish you'll be looking for the designer label).



GETTING THE VAPORS

For decades, fast-food chains have been using the industrial oven known as the CVap to keep pizza and fried chicken warm. Now chefs are applying its "controlled-vapor technology" to loftier pursuits. It's like bagless *sous vide*. The oven maintains vapor at temperatures far lower than the heat of steam, preventing food's moisture content from evaporating and enabling Jean-Georges Vongerichten to turn out fish as supple as butter and Wylie Dufresne (left) to make cauliflower succulent. —*Genevieve Ko*



THE PASSWORD IS OINK

Move over, Bay Area Opera Guild members. There's a new club in town. Twice a month, artisanal sausage producer Boccalone supplies its Salumi Society members with a CSA-style *sacchetto* containing a selection of such "tasty salted pig parts" as orange and wild fennel *salame*; *lardo* with rosemary and juniper; and *soppressata di Calabria*. Boccalone sells its two dozen varieties only through the society at present, but mail-order and retail operations are planned for later this year. (boccalone.biz) —*Gayle Keck*



PASTA TAKES THE SPICE ROUTE

PAPPARDELLE'S HANDCRAFTED FETTUCCINE AND LINGUINE IN FLAVORS LIKE ORANGE SZECHUAN, VERACRUZ BLACK BEAN, TUNISIAN HARISSA, AND DARK CHOCOLATE MAKE GOOD OLD SQUID INK TASTE JUST PLAIN OLD-SCHOOL. (FROM $7 PER POUND AT FARMERS MARKETS AND PAPPARDELLESONLINE.COM) —*Eric Hastie*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: JANET BELLER; ANGELA WYANT; ROMULO YANES (2)





RED, WHITE, AND NEW ...

We're smitten with iSi's silicone Flex-It Prep and Mixing bowls (sets of 3; $24.95 and $39.95; surlatable.com) and Progressive International's Collapsible Over-the-Sink Colander ($19.99; bedbath .com). —*Haley Thurshwell*

THE FILÉ FROM UNCLE

THE SECRET BEHIND ZESTY, THICK LOUISIANA GUMBO IS A DASH OF FILÉ POWDER (MADE FROM GROUND SASSAFRAS LEAVES). UNCLE BILL'S CREOLE BRAND, PRODUCED BY HAND USING A CENTURY-OLD FAMILY FORMULA, ADDS A FRESH KICK. (225-388-0893; FROM $6.50 FOR 1 OUNCE)





STIR ME

Natural peanut butter lovers, rejoice. Witmer Products has developed an ingenious stirring device to banish that pesky oil spill on the surface to the distant past. (Model 100, $12.50; witmerproducts.com)

GRIND TO GO

No more hijacking the S&P from the next table. Just stash Kikkerland Design's hand-size model in your pocket, or use it at home for cumin or fennel seeds. ($9; haskerhome.com)

ALWAYS GO WITH YOUR GUT

Imagine unlocking the secrets of the body's black box, the stomach, without invading live subjects. As of 15 months ago, scientists at the Institute of Food Research, in Norwich, England, have been doing just that. Crafted from plastic and steel, their artificial stomach (which resembles a stereo cabinet crowned with big blue funnels) mimics nearly all the functions of the gut: from muscle contraction and mixing to digestion by acid and enzymes. Meals go in looking like food and come out looking like, well, vomit. (The machine can actually regurgitate on command. "We over-engineered everything," says coinventor Richard Faulks.) Researchers can study this output (which in a real stomach would go to the small intestine) for clues about how proteins and fats satisfy hunger. Because the British government is worried about obesity, the model gut is often hired out to firms looking to devise indulgent foods that can fill you up quickly. Now if they could just figure out why our hearts still crave that big, juicy steak. —*Robb Mandelbaum*

ROMULO YANES

DRINKS

zinfandel chardonnay shiraz grenache



PUT A NEW CORK IN IT Penfolds Grange has always been an extreme wine: extremely oaky, extremely tannic, extremely expensive, and—after an extremely long time in the bottle—extremely delicious. The 1976 vintage of the iconic Shiraz-based Australian wine, tasted in the fall of 2005, gave as much pleasure as any I've tried. But few wines are as impenetrable as a newly released Grange; the 2001, sampled at the same time, was baffling. Would those tannins ever mellow? What miracle of alchemy could possibly transform that mouthful of splinters into liquid velvet? The same sorts of questions may have been on the minds of Penfolds management in 1957, when winemaker Max Schubert presented the 1951–1956 vintages of his experiment. They hated it and told him to stop making it. I probably would've done the same.

ROMULO YANES

The best I could say for the 2001 was that it was thought-provoking. But I do hope someone will open a bottle for me in 25 years or so. If I am that lucky, there's a good chance the wine will not have its original closure. Even with recent improvements in cork production, the life expectancy of a hunk of bark with one end in a high-acid soup and the other exposed to any number of atmospheric variables is estimated at 10 to 20 years. As with so many things in nature, the material is unpredictable. Eventually it will fail, and there's no way to know when the failure will occur.

A few private companies offer recorking services, and several top Bordeaux houses have extended the courtesy to their best clients in the past (in recent years, many have discontinued or scaled back the practice). But Penfolds is the only winery that takes its recorking show on the road. Every year, it brings a mobile bottling line and a ton of wine to a series of cities in North America, Europe, and Asia for "Re-corking Clinics." Consumers are invited to bring in any Penfolds wine more than 15 years old for evaluation. If there is reason to believe the cork has begun to lose its effectiveness (the best indication is a drop in the level of liquid in the bottle), the owner is given the option of having the bottle opened, the wine tasted by a Penfolds winemaker, and, if it's deemed sound, topped up with a small amount of the current vintage of that wine, recorked, and re-capsuled. The owner also gets to taste the wine, which may be the best reason to have the wine evaluated. There are risks, however. If the wine fails the test, the bottle will be resealed, but it will not be topped up, re-capsuled, or certified. A white dot will be placed on the bottle, indicating that it is no longer up to snuff.

SINCE 1991, PENFOLDS has examined more than 80,000 bottles. The benefits to the company are obvious: It solidifies brand loyalty, the winemakers get to taste older wines that have been stored under a wide range of conditions, and they're able to remove faded and flawed wines from the marketplace, thus strengthening the overall quality of available Penfolds wines. Occasionally they also get a big surprise. Like the time a young man arrived looking like a college student on moving day. Benjamin Cohen had 86 bottles of Grange in a motley assortment of cardboard boxes from the liquor store. Red flags were raised—were they stolen? Counterfeit? As it turned out, Cohen's '81 and '82 Granges had been a gift from his father, who'd stopped drinking several years earlier. Most were in good shape, and all were definitely authentic. Penfolds won a lifelong fan by treating Cohen like the 32-year-old real-estate executive he is, but the experience paid off for Cohen, too. He got to check the progress of his wines, and he now has more time to store the best of them without fear of cork-related problems (there is a minute chance that the new cork could be infected with TCA, a compound that deadens wine and can impart wet-dog aromas). Penfolds also enters all reconditioned bottles of Grange into a master database. If a cache of reconditioned Grange were stolen, the database would make it much more difficult to sell the liquid loot. The downside, of course, is that if a wine doesn't pass, its value is greatly reduced. On the other hand, that's just one more reason to drink it, and a not-quite-right Grange is far from the worst thing to put on the table. Some owners actually seem happy to get a white dot, the decision about when to open that particular bottle having been made for them.

THE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF A CORK, WITH ONE END IN A HIGH-ACID SOUP AND THE OTHER EXPOSED TO ANY NUMBER OF ATMOSPHERIC VARIABLES, IS 10 TO 20 YEARS.

And the goal is always to make people happy. At a recent clinic, a dapper businessman arrived with two bottles encased in bubble wrap. When the plastic came off, it turned out that neither was over 15 years old. His housekeeper had packed the wrong wines. Exhibiting a level of hospitality that would make restaurateur Danny Meyer proud, chief winemaker Peter Gago had a bottle of 1980 St. Henri Claret brought out so that the gentleman could experience the recorking process anyway. The bottle was examined—the wine was delicious—a new cork inserted, a new capsule fitted, and the refreshed St. Henri was handed to the surprised attendee. Not only was he spared bad news this day, he also got a lovely parting gift. Before he went back to the office (or wherever people who have housekeepers to pack their wine for them go), he spent a few minutes in the tasting room, where the current Penfolds releases were being poured, including the massive and extremely tannic 2002 Grange.

As I observed all this, it occurred to me that a clever wine lover could track down a bottle of 15-year-old Penfolds, take it to a Re-corking Clinic, and—assuming the wine wasn't already dead—get it freshened up. Worst-case scenario: The wine fails, you have a nice snack, taste through the Penfolds current releases, and maybe even get to spend a few minutes with Peter Gago, who is without doubt a rock star of winemaking. I'm not sure it's possible to have more fun than that for around a hundred bucks in Manhattan. —*James Rodewald*



A CLEAR SOLUTION?

Few wines are made to be aged for decades the way Penfolds Grange is. Most bottles are opened long before the cork fails (usually the day they're bought, in fact), so the main issue when it comes to closures is keeping the liquid in and air and unwanted flavors out. In Australia and New Zealand, where distance from the Portuguese cork industry has made getting top-quality corks a particular problem, many wineries have switched to screw caps or synthetic corks. On a trip to Austria last year, I was struck by the large number of bottles topped with glass stoppers. Alcoa developed the Vino-Seal (left) in Germany, and I love it. It is easy to open, reseals nicely, and imparts no flavors to the wine. It may not be the one perfect closure—there's probably no such thing—but it's nice to see U.S. wineries beginning to use it. For an account of the invention of the modern glass stopper, read George M. Taber's excellent new book, *To Cork or Not to Cork* (Scribner; $26). —*J.R.*

Wine advice for this month's menus and beyond. BY GERALD ASHER



SUNDAY SUPPER

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There's something down-home and comforting about meatloaf and Zinfandel, yet both are often underrated. Our meatloaf with prunes and bacon called for a vigorous but fine response, and I found it in the Windmill Estates Old Vine Zinfandel '05 from Lodi, California. Lodi's vineyards, close to the lower valley of the Mokelumne River, near where it flows into the delta of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, have the advantage of a warm inland temperature tempered by all that water and, more particularly, by ocean winds drawn across it throughout the summer. The robust qualities of Lodi Zinfandel are as much a result of the age of the vines from which the fruit is gathered as they are of the unusual climate in which it is grown. Windmill Estates' '05 has good fruit and a rustic energy. Benson Ferry's Old Vine Lodi Zinfandel '05 has even deeper flavor—a bit chocolaty from super-ripe tannins—and although it is less concentrated than some of the others I am recommending, it is a particularly supple and generous wine. Ravenswood Lodi Zinfandel '05 includes proportions of Petite Sirah and Carignane; the effect is deeper color and a general brightness. There's a little Petite Sirah (and Syrah) in Michael-David's Seven Deadly Zins Lodi Zinfandel '05, too. Don't be put off by the name: The wine is seriously good, with exuberant fruit backed by the creamy depth of oak aging. The same producer's Earthquake Zinfandel '05 also has Petite Sirah in its blend. But it's more tannic and, as the name suggests, almost explosive in scale. St. Amant's Old Vine Zinfandel '06 is equally impressive. Deep-colored and concentrated, the ripe tannins well concealed, it has such rich fruit that it makes an almost sweet impression. Lucas ZinStar Vineyard Reserve Lodi Zinfandel '02, from a cooler growing season, shows nevertheless how elegantly the best of these wines age.

THE SPICE IS RIGHT

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The citrus, apricots, and sweet spices of our Algerian dinner prompted thoughts of wines of similarly sunny disposition. I focused on Australia. The vineyards and wineries of Margaret River, in the west, are relatively new. Established in 1970, Cape Mentelle was among the first and, like its neighbors, was quick to accept new ideas in viticulture and winemaking. Cape Mentelle's Chardonnay '05 is made from grapes pressed as whole bunches without prior crushing, which protects their flavor and delicacy. It was allowed to ferment in French oak barrels with its own natural, indigenous yeast rather than be guided along a preordained path with the selection of a carefully cultured strain of yeast. The result is both silky and fleshy, a firm, seamless wine with boldly attractive fruit on nose and palate. Leeuwin shows a youthfully powerful aroma but is smooth, silky, and long on the palate. Vasse Felix's Heytesbury Chardonnay '04, from the first commercial winery established in the region (in 1967), also allowed to ferment in French oak barrels with whatever yeasts had attached themselves to the grape skins, is possibly the finest of the three—and therefore perhaps a little delicate for the shrimp *charmoula*. But never mind: It's flawless and exquisite.

Chateau Reynella, the birthplace of South Australia's wine industry, was founded in McLaren Vale in 1838. Its Grenache '04 is made from fruit brought in from small plots of old vines scattered throughout the region. Round and supple, the wine smells and tastes of dark plums and berries—a perfect complement to the chicken *tagine*. Grenache, the Mediterranean grape (hence the link to Algeria) that made McLaren Vale famous, fell out of favor when the fashion for Cabernet Sauvignon swept the world in the 1980s. Many major wineries in McLaren Vale simply stopped buying the fruit, forcing growers to rip out their vineyards and replant. D'Arenberg was an exception and kept the fruit in the ground, earning the vineyard the title of Custodian of Grenache. Hence the name, The Custodian, attached to their '05, a particularly elegant wine in which a crisp acidity gives it a fresh, bright profile. When Yangarra's Old Vine Grenache '05 is first poured, the oak in which it was aged seems to take precedence over the fruit. But once the wine has fully opened up, the fruit comes through and the oak falls back to give the wine a satisfying depth. Stephen Pannell uses old French barrels to give his McLaren Vale Grenache '04 the benefit of wood aging without imposing any oak tones. It has a bell-clear aroma with hints of spice, common in wine aged in older barrels, that has just the right resonance for the dish. It's the most expensive of my recommendations, but it is truly delicious.



RECOMMENDED WINES

FAMILY NIGHT

LODI ZINFANDELS

Benson Ferry Old Vine '05	$12
Lucas ZinStar Vineyard '02 (Limited availability; lucaswinery.com)	$50
Michael-David Earthquake '05	$28
Michael-David Seven Deadly Zins '05	$17
Ravenswood '05	$15
St. Amant Mohr-Fry Ranches Old Vine '06	$18
Windmill Estates Old Vine '05	$12

THE SPICE IS RIGHT

MARGARET RIVER CHARDONNAYS

Cape Mentelle '05	$25
Leeuwin Estate Prelude Vineyards '06	$29
Vasse Felix Heytesbury '04	$40

McLAREN VALE GRENACHES

Chateau Reynella '04	$24
D'Arenberg The Custodian '05	$19
S.C. Pannell '04	$50
Yangarra Single Vineyard Old Vine '05	$20

FROM LEFT: QUENTIN BACON; WILLIAM ABRANOWICZ

QUICK KITCHEN

DOUBLE CHOCOLATE PUDDING PARFAIT

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 25 MIN START TO FINISH: 35 MIN

An extra dose of decadent chocolate gives this classic layered dessert new life.

- **2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- **¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, divided**
- **¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder, divided, plus additional for garnish**
- **2 cups whole milk**
- **4 oz fine-quality semisweet chocolate (no more than 54% cacao if marked), finely chopped**
- **1 tablespoon unsalted butter**
- **1 cup chilled heavy cream**
- **¼ teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

▸Whisk together cornstarch, ¼ cup sugar, ¼ cup cocoa, and a pinch of salt in a heavy medium saucepan, then gradually whisk in milk. Bring to a boil, whisking constantly, then boil, whisking, until thickened, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in chopped chocolate and butter until melted. Transfer pudding to a metal bowl and quick-chill by setting in an ice bath and stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes.

▸Meanwhile, beat cream with vanilla and remaining 2 tablespoons sugar and 1 tablespoon cocoa until it just holds stiff peaks. Layer pudding and cream in 8-ounce glasses. Serve dusted with cocoa.

COOKS' NOTE: **Parfaits can be made 1 hour ahead and chilled, covered.**

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 48.

RECIPES BY RUTH COUSINEAU PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROMULO YANES



FOOD STYLING: PAUL GRIMES PROP STYLING: HALEY THURSHWELL FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION, SEE SHOPPING LIST



ROASTED HALIBUT WITH GARLIC SAUCE

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 25 MIN

A super-quick take on aioli, this garlicky sauce keeps the fish incredibly moist.

1¾ lb halibut fillet (1½ inches thick)
3 garlic cloves
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
⅓ cup mayonnaise
ACCOMPANIMENT: lemon wedges

▸Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in middle.
▸Put fish in an oiled shallow baking dish and sprinkle with ⅛ teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
▸Force garlic through a garlic press into a bowl, then whisk in oil and ⅛ teaspoon salt. Whisk in mayonnaise and spread over fish.
▸Bake, uncovered, until fish is just cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes.

SWISS CHARD WITH RAISINS AND ALMONDS

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Toasted almonds contrast beautifully with sweet, tender raisins and earthy chard.

½ large onion, sliced lengthwise ¼ inch thick (1 cup)
2½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
¼ teaspoon Spanish smoked paprika
2 lb Swiss chard, center ribs discarded and leaves coarsely chopped
½ cup golden raisins
½ cup water
¼ cup coarsely chopped almonds with skins

▸Cook onion with ¼ teaspoon salt in 2 tablespoons oil in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over medium heat, stirring, until softened. Sprinkle with paprika and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add chard in batches, stirring frequently, until wilted, then add raisins and water. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until chard is tender, about 7 minutes. Season with salt.
▸Cook almonds in remaining ½ tablespoon oil in a small heavy skillet over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until golden, 3 to 5 minutes. Sprinkle almonds over chard.

A Catalan-inspired dinner in under an hour



BANH MI

VIETNAMESE CHICKEN SANDWICH

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Despite the exotic name of this sandwich, you can get all the ingredients right at the supermarket. Liverwurst stands in for the traditional pork-pâté filling—the meatiness works beautifully with the sharp-flavored vegetables and fresh cilantro.

- **½ lb daikon, peeled**
- **1 carrot, peeled**
- **½ cup rice vinegar (not seasoned)**
- **1 tablespoon sugar**
- **1 (24-inch) soft baguette**
- **2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **1 tablespoon Asian fish sauce**
- **½ teaspoon soy sauce**
- **¼ lb liverwurst**
- **2 fresh jalapeños, thinly sliced**
- **½ sweet onion, cut into ¼-inch rings**
- **¾ cup packed cilantro sprigs**
- **2 cooked chicken breasts from a rotisserie chicken, thinly sliced**
- **Lettuce leaves**
- **2 tablespoons mayonnaise**

▸Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in middle.
▸Shred daikon and carrot in a food processor fitted with medium shredding disk. Stir together vinegar, sugar, and ½ teaspoon salt and toss with shredded vegetables. Let slaw stand, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes.
▸Meanwhile, heat baguette on rack in oven until crusty, about 5 minutes. Cut off and discard round ends, then split baguette.
▸Mix together oil, fish sauce, and soy sauce and brush on cut sides of bread. Spread liverwurst on bottom layer of bread and top with chiles, onion, and cilantro. ▸Drain slaw in a colander. ▸Arrange chicken, slaw, and lettuce on cilantro. Spread top layer of bread with mayonnaise and cut sandwich crosswise into fourths.

CHUNKY POTATO SOUP WITH DILL

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 40 MIN

This recipe was brought over from Poland by test kitchen director Ruth Cousineau's grandmother. After watching the soup disappear from our test kitchen in a matter of minutes, we have a feeling your family will love it, too.

- **2 carrots, cut into ½-inch pieces**
- **2 celery ribs, cut into ½-inch pieces**
- **1 large onion, coarsely chopped**
- **1½ lb russet (baking) potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces**
- **½ stick unsalted butter**
- **4 cups water**
- **1 cup whole milk**
- **2 tablespoons chopped dill**

▸Cook vegetables in butter in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot, covered, over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until beginning to brown and stick to bottom of pot, about 15 minutes. Add water, 1½ teaspoons salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and simmer, covered, until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Transfer 3 cups soup to a blender with milk and blend until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids). Return to pot, then stir in dill and salt and pepper to taste.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 50.

In Vietnam's favorite sandwich, a warm, crusty baguette lends its Continental pedigree to an Asian mix of rich meats and crisp vegetables.



40 min

THAI-STYLE BEEF WITH NOODLES

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 40 MIN START TO FINISH: 40 MIN

Don't be intimidated. This is actually just a Southeast Asian twist on beef-noodle soup: steak, fragrant broth, and eminently slurpable noodles.

- **1 tablespoon soy sauce**
- **1 tablespoon mild honey**
- **2 tablespoons Asian fish sauce, divided**
- **1 lb flank steak**
- **3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided**
- **2 large shallots, thinly sliced (1 cup)**
- **1 tablespoon finely chopped peeled ginger**
- **1½ teaspoons Thai green-curry paste**
- **1¾ cups reduced-sodium beef broth**
- **1 tablespoon fresh lime juice**
- **1 red bell pepper, cut into ¼-inch strips**
- **1 bunch scallions, trimmed and cut into 3-inch pieces**
- **¾ lb dried Asian egg noodles**

EQUIPMENT: **a large (2-burner) ridged grill pan (preferably cast-iron)**

GARNISH: **lime wedges; Asian fish sauce**

▸Mix together soy, honey, 1 tablespoon fish sauce, and ¼ teaspoon salt in a shallow baking dish, then add steak and turn to coat. Marinate at room temperature 20 minutes.

▸While steak marinates, heat 2 tablespoons oil in a small heavy saucepan over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then cook shallots, stirring occasionally, until browned well, about 8 minutes. Add ginger and curry paste and cook, stirring occasionally, 1 minute, then add broth and simmer 5 minutes. Stir in lime juice, remaining tablespoon fish sauce, and salt to taste and keep warm, covered.

▸Heat grill pan over medium-high heat until hot, then lightly oil. Grill steak, turning once, about 8 minutes total (for rare). Transfer to a cutting board and let stand 5 minutes.

▸Meanwhile, toss bell pepper and scallions with remaining tablespoon oil, then grill, turning frequently, until softened, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.

▸While steak stands, cook noodles in a pasta pot of boiling unsalted water until al dente, 4 to 7 minutes. Drain well, then add to vegetables and toss well. Divide noodles among 4 deep bowls and top with broth. Cut steak in half lengthwise, then thinly slice across the grain and serve on top of noodles.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 53.

Grilled flank steak hardly needs any help, but when it arrives laid delicately over aromatic noodles, who's going to complain?



20 min

CAULIFLOWER AND FETA OMELET

SERVES 2

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Little bites of cauliflower add wonderful texture to this open-face omelet; salty-tangy feta gives it character.

- **5 large eggs**
- **2½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **½ medium head cauliflower, cut into 1-inch-wide florets (3 cups)**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **½ cup crumbled feta (2 oz)**
- **¼ cup packed flat-leaf parsley leaves**

▸Beat eggs with ¼ teaspoon salt.
▸Heat oil in a 10-inch heavy nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then sauté cauliflower until browned and tender, 5 to 9 minutes. Reduce heat to medium, then add garlic, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ⅛ teaspoon pepper and sauté 1 minute.
▸Pour eggs over cauliflower. Cook, lifting edges to let uncooked egg run underneath and shaking skillet occasionally to loosen omelet, until almost set, 4 to 5 minutes. Slide out onto a large plate. Put skillet over omelet and, using pot holders, firmly hold plate and skillet together, then invert omelet back into skillet and cook 1 to 2 minutes. Slide out onto plate and sprinkle with feta and parsley.

LAMB CHOPS WITH SUN-DRIED TOMATO BUTTER

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 25 MIN

We found ourselves craving this sun-dried tomato butter, not just spreading it on lamb chops but also tossing it with orzo and smearing it onto slices of toast.

- **1 garlic clove**
- **¼ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, drained**
- **½ cup walnuts**
- **¼ teaspoon ground coriander**
- **¼ teaspoon cayenne**
- **1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley**
- **½ stick unsalted butter**
- **½ teaspoon fresh lemon juice**
- **8 rib lamb chops (¾ inch thick; 2 lb)**

GARNISH: **lemon wedges**

▸Mince and mash garlic to a paste with ¼ teaspoon salt. Transfer paste to a food processor and pulse with sun-dried tomatoes, walnuts, coriander, cayenne, parsley, and ⅛ teaspoon black pepper until finely chopped. Blend in butter and lemon juice, then season with salt.
▸Preheat broiler. Lightly oil rack of a broiler pan. ▸Pat lamb chops dry and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper (total), then broil on rack of broiler pan 4 to 5 inches from heat, turning once, 6 to 7 minutes total for medium-rare. Spread tomato butter over chops.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 54.

Whip up this effortless omelet for a weeknight dinner—its flavor combination is a nice change of pace, but it's still ultimate comfort food.

VEGETARIAN TONIGHT

Crisp, panfried quinoa cakes and an Italian-inspired medley of tender vegetables make a wonderfully comforting finish to a chilly winter's day. RECIPE BY LILLIAN CHOU

QUINOA CAKES WITH EGGPLANT-TOMATO RAGÙ AND SMOKED MOZZARELLA

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 1¼ HR

Food editor Lillian Chou, who is also GOURMET*'s resident runner of marathons, swears by quinoa: "I have so much more energy if I eat it before a race!" And transforming this power grain into crisp cakes topped with a substantial rustic sauce and gooey softened mozzarella creates another compelling reason to love it—it just tastes so good.*

FOR QUINOA CAKES

- **1½ cups water**
- **1 cup quinoa**
- **1 large egg, lightly beaten**
- **4 to 5 tablespoons olive oil, divided**

FOR TOPPING

- **1½ lb eggplant, cut into ½-inch cubes**
- **1 small onion, finely chopped**
- **2 teaspoons finely chopped garlic**
- **½ teaspoon dried oregano**
- **3 tablespoons olive oil**
- **1 cup grape or cherry tomatoes, halved**
- **½ cup drained bottled roasted red peppers, rinsed and chopped**
- **¾ cup water**
- **1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley**
- **¼ lb smoked mozzarella, diced (1 cup)**

MAKE QUINOA CAKES: Bring water and ½ teaspoon salt to a boil in a heavy medium saucepan. ▸Meanwhile, wash quinoa in 3 changes of water in a bowl, then drain well in a fine-mesh sieve. ▸Stir quinoa into boiling water and return to a boil, then simmer, covered, until quinoa is dry and water is absorbed, 20 to 30 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and cool, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes, then stir in egg.

▸Line a baking sheet with plastic wrap and lightly brush with oil. Lightly oil a 1-cup dry-ingredient measure. Pack enough quinoa into measure with a rubber spatula to fill it two-thirds full. (If spatula becomes sticky, dip in water.) Unmold onto baking sheet and gently pat quinoa into a 4-inch-wide patty with spatula. Make 3 more quinoa cakes, brushing measure with oil each time. Chill cakes, uncovered, at least 15 minutes.

MAKE TOPPING WHILE QUINOA COOKS AND CHILLS: Toss eggplant with 1 teaspoon salt in a colander and drain 30 minutes. Squeeze handfuls of eggplant to extract liquid, then pat dry.

▸Cook eggplant, onion, garlic, oregano, and ¼ teaspoon each of salt and pepper in oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, covered, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, roasted peppers, and water and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until eggplant is very tender and mixture is thick (if dry, thin with a little water), about 10 minutes.

COOK QUINOA CAKES: Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until it shimmers. Carefully add quinoa cakes and cook, turning once carefully and adding remaining 2 to 3 tablespoons oil, until crisp and golden, 8 to 10 minutes total (pat cakes to reshape with cleaned rubber spatula while cooking if necessary). Transfer to plates.

TO SERVE: Return eggplant *ragù* to a simmer and stir in parsley and half of mozzarella, then simmer, stirring, until cheese just begins to soften, about 30 seconds. Spoon over quinoa cakes, then sprinkle with remaining mozzarella.

COOKS' NOTES: **Quinoa cakes can be formed 1 day ahead and chilled, covered.**
• Eggplant-tomato *ragù*, without parsley and mozzarella, can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 56.



FOOD STYLING: MAGGIE RUGGIERO

TEN-MINUTE MAINS

RECIPES AND FOOD STYLING BY MAGGIE RUGGIERO

ROASTED COD WITH SHIITAKES IN MISO BROTH

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 20 MIN

Miso soup and quick-roasted mushrooms give Pacific cod a meaty umami boost.

- **4 (6-oz) pieces Pacific cod or hake fillet (about 1 inch thick)**
- **2½ tablespoons vegetable oil, divided**
- **¼ lb sliced shiitake mushroom caps**
- **2 (½-oz) single-serve packages dehydrated red miso soup**
- **1 scallion, thinly sliced**

▸Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in middle. ▸Pat fish dry in a small shallow baking pan and drizzle with ½ tablespoon oil, then sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. ▸Toss mushrooms with remaining 2 tablespoons oil and ¼ teaspoon each of salt and pepper, then spread in another small shallow baking pan. ▸Roast fish and mushrooms, stirring mushrooms once or twice, until fish is just cooked through and mushrooms are crisp, about 10 minutes.

▸Meanwhile, prepare soup according to package instructions. ▸Divide soup, mushrooms, and fish among 4 bowls and top with scallion.

ORECCHIETTE WITH PANCETTA AND BROCCOLI

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 15 MIN

As you may know, orecchiette *is Italian for "little ears." Their size and rounded shape are just right for holding chunky toppings—pancetta, pine nuts, and broccoli fit that bill nicely. Grating Parmigiano-Reggiano over the entire dish is always a good idea.*

- **¾ lb *orecchiette***
- **2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **1 garlic clove, smashed**
- **3 tablespoons pine nuts**
- **3 oz sliced pancetta, coarsely chopped**
- **5 scallions, thinly sliced**
- **10 oz frozen chopped broccoli, thawed, drained, and patted dry**

ACCOMPANIMENT: **grated parmesan**

▸Cook *orecchiette* in a pasta pot of boiling salted water (2 tablespoons salt for 6 quarts water) until al dente.

▸While pasta cooks, heat butter and oil with garlic in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat until garlic starts to sizzle. Add nuts and cook, stirring, until pale golden. Discard garlic and stir in pancetta and scallions, then cook 1 minute. Stir in broccoli and ¼ teaspoon each of salt and pepper and cook over high heat, stirring, 4 minutes. ▸Reserve ½ cup pasta-cooking water, then drain pasta and stir into broccoli mixture. Add some of reserved water to moisten if needed.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 57.

In this surprisingly fast dinner, sumptuous roasted cod is paired with the earthy, complex flavors of some favorite Japanese ingredients.





CHICKEN AND PARSNIP "FRIES" WITH SPICY VINEGAR

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

A shot of vinegar enlivens the concentrated sweetness of roasted parsnips—a perfect complement to simple roast chicken.

1½ lb parsnips
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
4 chicken breast halves with skin and bone (3½ lb)
½ cup distilled white vinegar
¼ teaspoon dried hot red-pepper flakes

▸Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in middle.
▸Peel parsnips and quarter lengthwise. (If large, cut lengthwise into eighths and cut out cores.) Toss with 1 tablespoon oil in a large shallow baking pan and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Roast, stirring occasionally, while preparing chicken (about 5 minutes).
▸Pat chicken dry, then sprinkle with 1½ teaspoons salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over high heat until it shimmers, then brown skin side of chicken, about 3 minutes.
▸Transfer chicken, skin side up, to pan with parsnips, reserving skillet, and roast until chicken is cooked through and parsnips are tender and caramelized, about 20 minutes. ▸While chicken roasts, reheat fat in skillet with remaining tablespoon oil, then add vinegar and red-pepper flakes and boil, stirring, 30 seconds. Pour into a cup and keep warm, covered.
▸Serve chicken and fries drizzled with spicy vinegar.

SMOKED PORK CHOPS WITH CHERRY TOMATOES AND WHITE BEANS

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 15 MIN

The tangy sweetness of cherry tomatoes contrasts nicely with the plump, smoky chops, while green-olive paste gives a briny edge to the white beans.

4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 lb cherry or grape tomatoes (3 cups)
1 garlic clove, smashed
4 smoked pork chops (1 lb total)
2 (15- to 19-oz) cans cannellini or other white beans, drained and rinsed
2 tablespoons green-olive paste
¾ teaspoon thyme leaves

▸Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a 10-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then cook tomatoes and garlic, lightly pressing tomatoes occasionally, until tomatoes begin to burst, about 5 minutes.
▸While tomatoes cook, heat remaining tablespoon oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then brown pork chops on both sides, about 4 minutes total.
▸Stir beans into tomatoes along with olive paste, thyme, and salt and pepper to taste and cook, covered, 2 minutes. Add chops and cook, covered, until heated through, about 2 minutes.

Chile-flecked vinegar perks up crisp-skinned chicken, while parsnip "fries" are a delicious alternative to their potato brethren.





THINK AGAIN

Mary Ellen Carroll has cooked an elaborate meal on a bridge and rotated an entire building, all in the name of art. Next up? The kitchen sink. BY STEPHEN HENDERSON

WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT "flipping" houses, they usually mean buying real estate at a low price, giving the property a quick polish of renovation, and then selling at a profit. In her newest creation, however, New York City–based conceptual artist and chef Mary Ellen Carroll is literally flipping a Texas home around 180 degrees. In the process, she's challenging assumptions ❯

The conceptual artist and chef at work in the Kohler factory.

COURTESY OF JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER AND KOHLER CO.

about every aspect of domestic architecture—that's everything *and* the kitchen sink. Carroll's topsy-turvy project is being realized in Houston, she explains, because it is the largest metropolitan area in America that doesn't have a formal zoning code for residences.

IN A NEIGHBORHOOD CALLED SHARPSTOWN, she purchased a three-bedroom, 1,200-square-foot tract house (built in 1954) that structural engineers, following her instructions, will soon lift and spin halfway around, before returning it to its foundation and reconnecting all systems. The result, she says, will "reprogram" the structure from a residential building to a commercial or public-use space. "Everything I do is about questioning," Carroll explains. "In Sharpstown, I'm looking at decisions related to design and urban planning. What is front? What is back? What are the invisible processes that impose consistencies in how people live?"

Not content to simply flip the house, Carroll envisioned ways to deconstruct its plumbing, too. For help with this, she turned to the Kohler Company in Wisconsin, the nation's largest manufacturer of plumbing materials. Since 1974, Kohler has operated Arts/Industry, an unusual program that invites artists to experiment with the company's facilities and industrial technologies. "We try to select artists doing extraordinary work, who will benefit from exposure to the factory and create new ways of thinking among our factory associates," says Ruth Kohler, director of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, which administers Arts/Industry. "We were intrigued by Mary Ellen's mind and the conceptual nature of her work, particularly when we learned about the house in Texas."

THIS DIDN'T PREVENT WORKERS FROM DUBBING THE AMORPHOUSLY SHAPED SINK THAT RESULTED THE 'FLINTSTONE' MODEL, AS IF THE CARTOON HOUSEWIFE WILMA MIGHT USE IT TO CLEAN UP AFTER A DINNER OF DINOSAUR STEAKS.

Carroll, 46, who regularly exhibits her work at galleries and institutions around the world, from the Whitney Museum in New York to the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, is a recipient of both Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundation fellowships. Whether her creations involve crashing a 1985 Buick Riviera into Munich's Museum für Völkerkunde or walking out of her apartment door penniless with only her passport and the clothes on her back for a six-week visit to Argentina, she prides herself on not having a signature style.

On the contrary, she's equally comfortable creating with neon, photography, ceramics, or food—the last in an ongoing series of performance pieces she calls "itinerant gastronomy," in which she and her collaborator, Donna Wingate, cook exceedingly elaborate meals in inhospitable settings. (When was the last time you tried to deep-fry brioche donuts and serve them with chestnut purée or make veal sausage from scratch while perched on the Goethals Bridge, between Staten Island and New Jersey?) If there's any consistency to her oeuvre, it's that her creations all share a certain degree of theatricality and tricksterism and are conceived to frustrate easy assumptions about what constitutes a work of art. Carroll demystifies her sense of conceptual art by likening it to cooking. "A really great recipe is still great, whether or not the dish is ever prepared," she says. "My exploration tends to be less about representation, more about language."

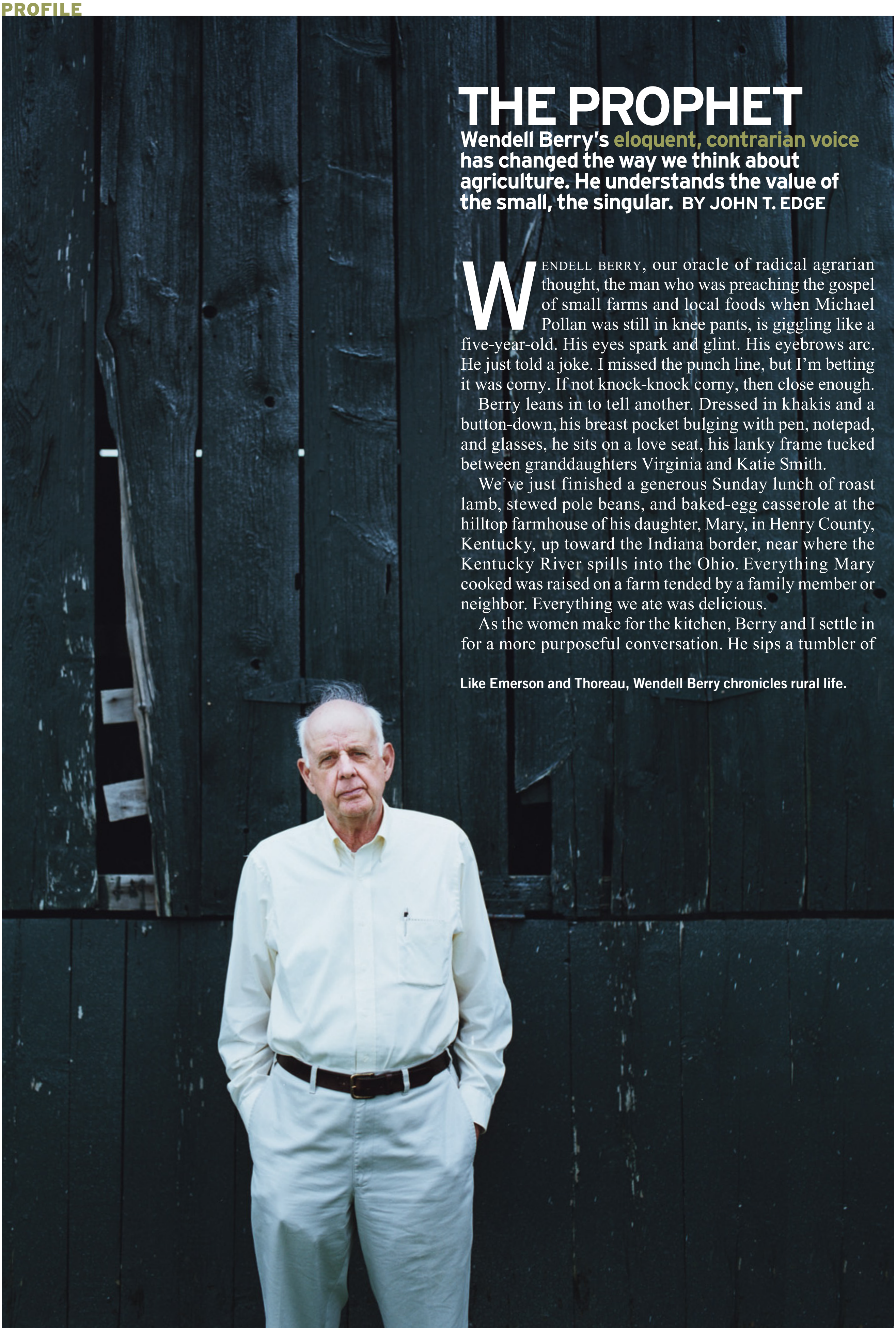
Carroll admits to having felt overwhelmed at first when she was set loose at Kohler. "The factory floor is the size of many football fields. There was such a complete difference in scale between what I can do alone in my studio and here with machines and processes that are all designed to produce large quantities of things with incredible efficiency." One day, while observing the manufacture of sinks, Carroll discovered that pads made of Styrofoam—a material chosen because it melts away when the porcelain is fired inside the kiln—are used to cushion the product as it is transported on the kiln car. With her inside-out approach to the Sharpstown house, Carroll immediately decided that she wanted to make a kitchen sink using Styrofoam packing material as a mold.

Workers at Kohler were initially dubious, and their trepidation seemed justified when several early prototypes collapsed or otherwise failed to take shape. "I thought it would be simple, but it turned out to be no end of trouble," Carroll recalls. "The interesting thing about being an artist, though, is you can only learn if you are willing to fail. And what's incredible is that when the factory workers saw my persistence, they were willing to match my efforts every step of the way."

This didn't prevent them, though, from dubbing the amorphously shaped white sink that resulted the "Flintstone" model, as if the television-cartoon housewife Wilma might use it to clean up after a dinner of dinosaur steaks. Ruth Kohler sees the workers' teasing as an essential part of the process. "Sometimes our factory associates think the visiting artists are dilettantes, simply playing at what they do," she says. "But someone like Mary Ellen, who is so articulate about her work, has a big impact on their lives. As they began to feel more comfortable with her, they were even able to critique her work, but in a nice way."

THAT HER CREATIONS INVITE such response was noted, too, by Charles Renfro, the project architect for the newly constructed home of the Institute of Contemporary Art museum, in Boston. While it was still under construction, Carroll cooked one of her "itinerant gastronomy" dinners—including oyster soup with salsify, butternut-squash risotto, and panfried snapper with parsnip purée and balsamic-glazed red onions—on-site for a group of guests that included Renfro, Harvard professor Homi Bhabha, and actor John Malkovich. Watching her in action that evening, Renfro says he was amazed by Carroll's unique combination of talents. "Mary Ellen's investigations are fueled by a kind of childish curiosity, but combined with a very sophisticated adult's resourcefulness. It makes her slightly dangerous. That night at the ICA, for instance, rather than set up a catering zone off-site, in another room, she put all the equipment around the main table, clearly making a point about the process of cooking," Renfro recalls. "It was about stripping off the sheen of effortlessness and showing that there really is work and love and energy involved in this thing she is doing for you."

By designing a kitchen sink that's impossible to ignore, Mary Ellen Carroll has shown herself to be the rare magician who can make a trick more mysterious by revealing how it's done.



THE PROPHET

Wendell Berry's eloquent, contrarian voice has changed the way we think about agriculture. He understands the value of the small, the singular. BY JOHN T. EDGE

Wendell Berry, our oracle of radical agrarian thought, the man who was preaching the gospel of small farms and local foods when Michael Pollan was still in knee pants, is giggling like a five-year-old. His eyes spark and glint. His eyebrows arc. He just told a joke. I missed the punch line, but I'm betting it was corny. If not knock-knock corny, then close enough.

Berry leans in to tell another. Dressed in khakis and a button-down, his breast pocket bulging with pen, notepad, and glasses, he sits on a love seat, his lanky frame tucked between granddaughters Virginia and Katie Smith.

We've just finished a generous Sunday lunch of roast lamb, stewed pole beans, and baked-egg casserole at the hilltop farmhouse of his daughter, Mary, in Henry County, Kentucky, up toward the Indiana border, near where the Kentucky River spills into the Ohio. Everything Mary cooked was raised on a farm tended by a family member or neighbor. Everything we ate was delicious.

As the women make for the kitchen, Berry and I settle in for a more purposeful conversation. He sips a tumbler of

Like Emerson and Thoreau, Wendell Berry chronicles rural life.

RANDY HARRIS







All in a day's work: Berry, born and bred in the hills and valleys of northwestern Kentucky, has farmed his family's land for more than 40 years.

Glenmorangie Scotch, proving that the gospel of local has its limits. I pour another glass of Smith-Berry Vintner's Reserve; made from the Norton grape, it tastes of black cherry and oak, and is produced by Mary's husband, Chuck Smith. (Like many farmers in the region, he has abandoned tobacco in favor of new possibilities.)

I've long admired Berry's writing, how his critiques of industrial farming and get-big-or-get-out monoculture play across pages like drumbeats, calling thoughtful eaters to arms. In preparation for this visit, I spent the past week reading deeply from his collected works and exploring his extended community. But I did not arrive as an acolyte.

Having seen the 73-year-old interviewed on television, having heard him hold forth in debate, I thought he would be feisty, even crotchety. I knew he was fond of calling agribusiness promoters "pornographers of farming." I knew he denounced capital-intensive agriculture as implicit in the "farmer-killing and land-killing economy." I liked the acuity of that language, but I didn't figure on laughing much.

DEPENDING UPON YOUR PERSPECTIVE, Berry, born just a few miles from the homestead he now works, is a farmer who writes or a writer who farms. Like his father, an attorney who grew tobacco, he declares no preference.

Berry plows furrows behind a draft horse on an 80-acre spread tucked amid the pleated hills and staggered ridges of almost-Appalachia. He tends a herd of lambs and harvests them for his family table. He raises pole beans in the summer and, after his wife, Tanya, jars them, takes pleasure in unscrewing the lids come winter. He writes essays, fiction, and poetry in longhand.

Berry wrote his first book in 1960. Four decades hence, he has written more than 40. In the time that has passed since the 1977 release of *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, Berry has argued tirelessly for interdependent communities, small family farms, and local foods. His outlook marries agrarian and environmental ideologies, but he doesn't settle for either. A traditional agrarian values small farms and argues that they are essential to the political and social well-being of the nation; Berry claims they are key to our ecological health. Environmentalists often concern themselves with the against-all-odds protection of wilderness; Berry believes land was meant to be worked by man.

In fusing the two camps, he has sometimes alienated both of them. Berry has been a loud, lonely clarion for decades, and now his time has come. Evidence of his influence is everywhere, especially if you read the culinary manifestos of the moment. Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma* owes a debt to Berry's writing and advocacy. So does Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation*. Pollan, in particular, endorses Berry's dictum: "Eating with the fullest pleasure—pleasure, that is, that does not depend on ignorance—is perhaps the profoundest enactment of our connection with the world."

Today, Berry is hopeful. The same man who once declared, "Nearly every one of us, nearly every day of his life, is contributing *directly* to the ruin of this planet," sees bright prospect in an emergent demographic. Berry calls them "urban agrarians." And he wants to talk about them.

They are a citified clientele, Berry tells me—people who won't settle for being "mere consumers" who go to the grocery store and "give a trust that has not been earned."

It's all about education, Berry says, as the sun dips behind the oaks that frame the farmhouse. "The trick is to keep the talk intelligent. *Sustainable* is already virtually a useless term. We're going to go to *durable* next or something like that. We'll be reduced to *long-lasting* or *permanent* or *eternal*." Terminology has to be "specific and elaborate," Berry says. "And that simply means that you've got to have people who insist that their food comes from good farms, and that means they've got to recognize what a good farm is."

Berry knows good farms. He finds solace in the family farm, in the ancient rhythms of tending a crop. That's where his beliefs were born and where they find purchase. Yes, he earned two degrees from the University of Kentucky. And he received a fellowship to Stanford, where he studied with Wallace Stegner. But at heart, Berry remains a thinker who takes his cues from workers. He argues vigorously for the import of their

A BERRY PRIMER

If you want to read Wendell Berry's farm-focused nonfiction, start with *The Art of the Commonplace*, a compendium that begins with a chapter from *The Unsettling of America* and closes with "The Pleasures of Eating." For poetry, stalk used-book stores until you find the chapbook *Farming*, in which Berry dubs soil a "divine drug." To get a handle on Berry's fictional community of Port William, start with *That Distant Land*, a collection of stories.—*J.T.E.*

lives. "It is well established among us that you may hold up your head in polite society with a public lie in your mouth or other people's money in your pocket or innocent blood on your hands," he writes in an essay defending them, "but not with dishwater on your hands or mud on your shoes."

POPULISM SUITS BERRY. Early in the week, while I was eating dinner at Proof on Main, a swish new Louisville restaurant, a waiter noticed that I was reading *The Unsettling of America*. "He came to speak to my class once," said the twenty-something of Berry's tenure at the University of Kentucky. "We used to talk about him. We thought, 'He doesn't care who he pisses off; he speaks his mind.' We liked that."

The next night, as I dipped in and out of *Home Economics*, a collection of essays with titles like "Six Agricultural Fallacies" and "A Defense of the Family Farm," Edward Lee, chef of Louisville's 610 Magnolia, dished up a Berry-inspired menu: local poussin set on top of a parsnip *pavé*, followed by a carpaccio of Kentucky elk with foraged mushrooms.

"He can be unnerving," Lee said, gesturing toward my paperback. "Especially when his words come across in that voice-of-God kind of way. But the truth is supposed to shake you up. What he writes compels us—farmers and chefs and diners—to pay closer attention to what goes onto the table. He sets a standard that guides what I do. I'm not saying I live up to that standard, not hardly, but it's something to set my sights on."

Rare is the visionary who argues well enough and lives long enough to see his ideas adopted and executed. I could argue that Berry has. Although he doesn't seem wholly comfortable with that knowledge, of late he has begun accepting the possibility that his words and advocacy have had some effect.

"It's impossible to look at this as the outcome of any one person's work or any one thing in particular," he tells me—the heel-dragging acolyte in training—as darkness falls and plans are made for the week of farmwork ahead. "I began with the idea that if you made an argument and made it well, it would have an influence. Maybe writing does have the power to change minds. And something slow, something cumulative builds from that."

Berry measures his success in conversations, in letters received from readers, in his influence upon fellow writers. But I wish for something more for him. I wish Berry could have been with me later that same week, when, on the way to the airport, I spot a bumper sticker that reads "Eating Is an Agricultural Act." Printed in black on a field of white, the words are lifted from his essay "The Pleasures of Eating," first published in the slim 1990 paperback *What Are People For?* I do a double take and laugh, thinking of Berry's "urban agrarians."

Perhaps it's imprudent to distill Berry's philosophy down to a single phrase, much less one plastered to the rear end of a red Chevy pickup, outfitted with a bed liner and a satellite-radio receiver, idling in Louisville traffic. But I prefer to think that Berry would laugh, too, recognizing the driver as just the sort of consumer on whom he has built his hopes.

As the truck recedes from view, Berry's words sink in. As much as any slogan can, this one serves as both introduction and summation, highlighting the depth and—taking note as I have of that tailgate placement—the reach of Berry's ideas.





WHITE HOT

After scaling the heights of the culinary world, Britain's Marco Pierre White famously abandoned the stove. But on a recent trip to Jamaica, the bad-boy chef was on fire all over again. By Monica Eng Photographs by Andrea Fazzari

Island-inspired: White's pepper shrimp on sugarcane with seared caramelized mango melds classical style with local ingredients.





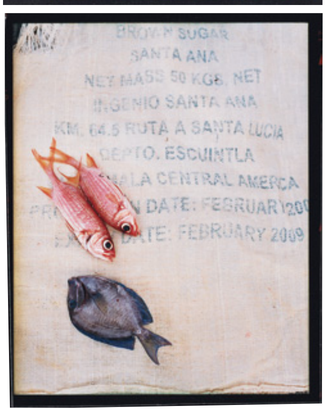




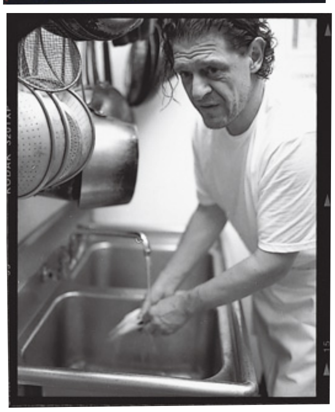

Above, clockwise from top left: Island bounty at one of many roadside produce stands; water-view dining at Cloggy's on the Beach; chef George "Otto" Miller in the kitchen at Cloggy's; bringing in the catch; browsing at the market on Fisherman's Beach; White's rock lobster with basil; bananas, peanuts, and some of the other ingredients that go into Donald "Cereal" Brown's signature elixirs; "panache" of squirrelfish and crisp calamari. Below, clockwise from top left: White goes debonair at the fish market; a heaping bowl of fish tea; music, mon; looking out to sea from Royal Plantation; step one in the preparation of steamed red mullet with orange and ginger; the end result; fresh bammy cakes at Ultimate Jerk Center; the last of the catch, lounging on the beach. Opposite: As White discovered, fresh fish is everywhere, every day, in Jamaica.













The cover of Marco Pierre White's 1990 cookbook, *White Heat*, features a grainy black-and-white photo of a brooding Adonis: Jean-Paul Belmondo meets Eddie Vedder, all full-lipped desire and shaggy-haired intensity. The original rock 'n' roll chef—in his book *Heat*, writer Bill Buford calls him "the most foul-tempered, most mercurial, and most bullying" of all British cooks—White has served as mentor to everyone from Gordon Ramsay to Heston Blumenthal, and larger-than-life personalities from Anthony Bourdain to Mario Batali have admitted to styling themselves after him. But White didn't just look and swear the part; he was, by all accounts, a genius behind the stove.

The third of four boys born to an Italian mother and British dad, White grew up in the industrial city of Leeds and got his first cooking gig at the age of 16. He arrived in London as a 19-year-old (with exactly seven pounds and thirty-six pence in his pocket) and, after talking his way into a job with Albert and Michel Roux, moved on to kitchens at Chez Nico, La Tante Claire, and Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons. By age 33, he'd become the youngest chef to be awarded three *Michelin* stars and the first British chef ever to do so—an exceptional achievement in itself.

White's attitude proved as fierce as his talent. He became a regular in the London tabloids, which chronicled everything from the patrons he ejected mid-meal for offending him one way or another to the time he responded to a businessman's request for an off-the-menu side of fries by hand-cutting, personally cooking, and then proceeding to charge the guy 25 pounds for the order. Readers also got the story of the underling who complained of heat in the kitchen and had the back of his chef's jacket and pants slashed open by his knife-wielding boss, and of the mink coat held hostage in response to a customer who was being overly impatient for his soufflé. (Also well documented were White's exploits with the opposite sex; he has been married three times, including, in 1992, to a 21-year-old model, a union that lasted all of 15 weeks.)

But not long after reaching the pinnacle of the culinary world, Marco Pierre White decided to ditch it all. In 1999, at the age of 38, the bad-boy wunderkind renounced his stars and quit cooking altogether. "I was being judged by people who had less knowledge than me," he recently told a reporter, "so what was it truly worth? I gave *Michelin* inspectors too much respect, and I belittled myself. I had three options: I could be a prisoner of my world and continue to work six days a week, I could live a lie and charge high prices and not be behind the stove, or I could give my stars back, spend time with my children, and reinvent myself."

Reinvent he did. Today, White is an entrepreneur in a Savile Row suit, the mastermind behind the $100-million White Star Line empire, whose assets include the London establishments Belvedere, L'Escargot, Luciano, and the Frankie's chain of Italian restaurants.

But you still couldn't find the guy with a sauté pan in his hand. Promoting his autobiography, *Devil in the Kitchen* (titled *White Slave* in Britain), in Chicago this past May, White reiterated his intention to keep his distance from the stove. "I can't ever cook again, not day in and day out, not professionally, just to earn money."

His 21 years in restaurant kitchens, he said, had caused a kind of social retardation and had kept him not only from getting to know his four children but from getting to know himself. (Not that he's slowed down; he recently opened Marco, the Chelsea soccer-ground restaurant he named for his youngest son, and wrapped up a debut as host of the U.K.version of *Hell's Kitchen*—known in the U.S. for the antics of former host and current White rival Gordon Ramsay.)

So what on earth is Marco Pierre White now doing crouched in a dusty roadside shed in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, stirring a pot of bananas and oats next to a grinning Rastafarian?

Back in May, the chef (who up until three years ago suffered from an acute fear of flying) had escaped from his book tour for a brief visit with his friend Gordon "Butch" Stewart, owner of the island's Royal Plantation resort (as well as the more famous Sandals and Beaches).

"You can't believe the produce," White had gushed to me over the phone back then. "The trees are bursting with breadfruit and mango. All along the road, guys are carrying lines dripping with fresh fish. Food is everywhere."

And so, five months later, here he is. And he's not simply lying around on the beach. (In fact, says White, he detests idleness. "I don't do vacations. Work, output, doing things, that's what energizes me.") Marco Pierre White has come to Jamaica to cook. After almost eight years in the wilderness, the man considered perhaps the finest chef of his generation has re-emerged to develop a menu for his buddy's resort. Assuming all goes well over the course of a week, Le Papillon, Stewart's fine-dining establishment, will reopen later this year with a menu of island-inflected food and the name Marco Pierre White at the Royal Plantation hung over its door.

In rolled-up Levi's, slip-on Keds, and a loose-fitting T-shirt, the six-foot-three chain-smoker looks on as the Rasta, Donald "Cereal" Brown, simmers a vanilla-scented porridge over a wood fire on the floor. As the concoction heats up, Cereal

THE DETAILS

STAYING THERE

Royal Plantation Spa and Golf Resort (888-487-6925; royalplantation.com; from $365), in Ocho Rios, is owned by Marco Pierre White's friend Butch Stewart, who is also the force behind the famous all-inclusive resorts Sandals and Beaches. Royal Plantation was built in the 1950s and retains a classic old-world style of luxury and elegance. White's new restaurant should be open in a few months. Right next door, the **Jamaica Inn** (800-837-4608; jamaicainn.com; from $280) has suites and cottages done up in tropical colonial style, with furniture featuring crisp white linen framed by walnut and bamboo.

EATING THERE

Cloggy's on the Beach (Crane Rd.; 876-634-2424), in Black River, is a breezy place where you dine in the thatched gazebo or at picnic tables on the beach. Lobster, conch, shrimp, and the catch of the day are all served to order—either fried, steamed, curried, or in garlic sauce. In Ocho Rios, **Bi Bi Bips Bar and Grill** (93 Main St.; 876-974-6378) is popular with locals, who dine on oxtail and goat curry, jerk chicken (delicious, but more like American barbecue than true Jamaican jerk), and jerk burgers while sitting on open-air verandas right above the water. Dave Roberts, owner of **Dave's Lobster Shack**, at Fisherman's Beach (next to Margaritaville Beach; 876-585-5385), in Ocho Rios, serves garlic lobster and fish tea in a simple, friendly seaside setting that's popular with the fishermen. In Discovery Bay Square (opposite the Green Grotto Caves), on the way to St. Ann, **Ultimate Jerk Center and Rest Stop** (Main St.; 876-973-2054) is a top-notch restaurant with smoky meats, dense bammy cakes, excellent rice and beans, and a fiery "brown sauce."—*M.E.*

prepares his "magnum," a thick tonic of banana, oats, sweetsop, peanuts, and malted soy milk. "When you're having some sex," he explains to his visitor, "this will give you extra energy."

"I love that!" says White with a wicked laugh and another chug of the elixir.

Later that afternoon, I drive with him to St. Ann's, where the stray dogs poking at garbage and the untamed food markets conspire to burst the island's resort-bubble image. But White isn't fazed by any of it—not by the cloudy buckets of mackerel or the tubs of floating pigs' tails. So thrilled is he by the fragrant stands of pineapple, mango, sweetsop, and ginger that he can't stop grabbing the produce and holding it to his nose.

"I've never seen ginger so small and dirty," he enthuses. "It looks like they've just pulled it out of the garden. The pawpaws smell of pawpaw. The coconut water is sensational, and the coconut jelly amazing. I've never seen food like it in my life."

The following day, en route to Negril, we stop at a fruit stand where a man with a machete is whittling down sugarcane and coconut as though sculpting carrots with a paring knife. White dashes out to chat and to grab some pineapples and bananas, then zips back into the car.

At Cloggy's on the Beach, an open-air place in Black River, we're nursing Red Stripes and relaxing to the reggae beat when he jumps up and disappears into the kitchen. There, he finds the chef pulverizing a tough piece of conch with a monkey wrench and, delighted, looks on as the man makes deep slashes down the sides of a red snapper, filling each one of the crevices with salty seasoning before sliding the fish into a cast-iron pan of sizzling oil. Eventually White is chased out by the boss, who complains that the other customers are being neglected, and settles back in at our oceanfront table, where we dig into the garlic conch and fried snapper, served on mismatched plates. "Overfrying the fish brings out more flavor," he says as we watch the sun dip below the horizon. "Now this is proper Jamaican street food."

The next morning, after a quick breakfast of salt fish and ackee (the national dish), the chef hustles us out to the beach by six-thirty in order to be there for the first catch. A blond Rasta offers us a bowl of a red brew known as "fish tea," made with whole fish, bouillon, and Excelsior water crackers, which fluff up in the liquid to give them, as White says, "the texture of scallops." He chooses some king crabs, still bubbling at the mouth, several spiny lobsters, half a dozen chicken lobsters, a tangle of squid, some snapper, and a bucketful of reef fish and leads us back to the hotel.

That afternoon, I find him hard at work in the kitchen, slicing fresh ginger into a fine julienne (and blanching it repeatedly to remove the heat) as lobsters crawl off the cutting board. He calls for a pot of boiling water, a stick of butter, parsley, garlic, and a piping bag. He slices the cloves lengthwise, removes the green sprouts, tops them with sea salt, and creams everything against the cutting board with a chef's knife before blending the paste with the softened butter and chopped parsley. It all goes into the bag. Next he poaches the chicken lobsters and transfers them to a covered bowl. He splits the crustaceans lengthwise in two continuous slices, removes the tail meat, pipes butter into the shells, and replaces the meat. One more layer of butter, followed by a trip into the oven, and they're ready to go.

But White isn't finished. Before you know it, he's plowing through rock lobster with basil, tomatoes, and olive oil; and a fried snapper with ginger in an orange reduction—a tribute to a dish we'd eaten at Cloggy's the day before, with seasonings borrowed from a Caribbean cookbook he picked up at a spice factory on the way.

On the third day, I find myself standing over a garbage can popping out fish eyes with a pair of dull scissors. White has decided he wants to try his own version of fish tea, using more than a dozen of the reef fish he'd picked up that morning. I can't help but notice the way he's sliding all over the wet floor, as if there were actually a dining room out there filled with hungry customers. He is an incredibly physical cook, even eschewing utensils to run his fingers through pans of hot oil to check the temperature. The fish tea gets a swipe every ten minutes. And a lick "so I can see how the flavors are developing. You need to search out every ingredient you've put in," he says. "If you can't taste them, you need to add more."

In the course of four hours, White has created not only a new, velvety version of fish tea, but four other dishes as well: crab salad in avocado; pepper shrimp on sugarcane with seared, caramelized mango; squirrelfish with garlic salt; and red mullet with scallions and ginger.

"From the time I walk out of the kitchen with one dish," he says, lighting up yet another Marlboro, "my mind is on the next one. I like the spontaneity. Everything we buy, we use."

"It's quite magical being dumped in a place where you don't know anything about the food culture," he tells me later. "Because I'm dyslexic, I don't absorb information through reading the way others do. I get it visually or by listening. Going into the markets, out to the fisherman's beach, to Cloggy's—that's my way of understanding."

So is White returning to the kitchen for good?

"I enjoyed cooking in Jamaica," he says. "I loved the produce, but now I'm back to slicing cakes and doing deals. It was a short-term fling." And fun while it lasted.

LOBSTER WITH GARLIC BUTTER

Adapted from Marco Pierre White

SERVES 2

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

There's enough garlic butter here to drench every morsel of lobster meat—you'll want to serve crusty bread on the side to soak it all up.

2 small garlic cloves
2 sticks unsalted butter, softened
1½ teaspoons finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 (1¼-lb) live lobsters
GARNISH: lemon wedges; sea salt

▸Preheat oven to 450°F with a large shallow baking pan in upper third.

▸Mince and mash garlic to a paste with ½ teaspoon salt, then stir together with butter and parsley. ▸Plunge lobsters headfirst into a large pot of boiling salted water (3 tablespoons salt for 6 quarts water) and cook, covered, 3 minutes from time they enter water. Transfer with tongs to a plate and let stand 5 minutes. (Lobsters will not be fully cooked.) ▸Lightly crack claws, then split lobsters lengthwise and discard innards from body cavity.
▸Remove tail meat from 1 lobster and cut crosswise into 8 pieces. Spread about 2 tablespoons garlic butter in one empty half shell, then fill that shell with all of sliced lobster and dot with 1 tablespoon garlic butter. Spoon about 5 tablespoons garlic butter into other empty half shell (for dipping). Repeat with remaining lobster.
▸Bake in preheated pan until just cooked through, about 6 minutes.

For more MARCO PIERRE WHITE recipes, visit gourmet.com.



THE SPICE IS RIGHT

Reflecting the country's long history as a crossroads for Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, one chef's vision of Algerian cooking is dazzlingly complex, comfortingly familiar—and entirely unique.

Recipes by Farid Zadi Photographs by William Abranowicz

The mere suggestion of spices in this flatbread, along with its gentle whole-wheat flavor, lends subtle support to tangy pickled shrimp.



MENU SERVES 4

SHRIMP CHARMOULA

ALGERIAN FLATBREAD
Cape Mentelle Margaret River Chardonnay '05

CHICKEN TAGINE WITH APRICOTS AND SPICED PINE NUTS

BRAISED TURNIPS WITH POPPY-SEED BREAD CRUMBS

FENNEL AND CARROT SLAW WITH OLIVE DRESSING
Chateau Reynella McLaren Vale Grenache '04

ORANGE-SCENTED BEIGNETS

CLEMENTINES IN GINGER SYRUP

MINT TEA



Painting the flatbread dough with spiced oil and coiling it up gives it a haunting flavor and a flaky texture that begs to be pulled apart.



Lyon-born Farid Zadi has a classic French pedigree—he worked his way up from dishwasher to international chef—but his real training was bred in the bone. As a boy, he spent hours with the women in his Algerian family's kitchen; today, the L.A.-based cooking instructor is championing the cause of North African cooking. As you will see in these recipes, his food is irresistible.

How do all these disparate elements add up to a dish so soothing and nuanced? "It's all about balance and harmony," says Zadi.

SHRIMP CHARMOULA

SERVES 4 (FIRST COURSE)
ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 8¾ HR (INCLUDES MARINATING)

The fact that Algeria shares culinary traditions with Spain, Italy, and France is evident in many of its dishes, like this skabetch *(which is quite similar in spirit to Spanish* escabeche*). The shrimp is pickled in a gently tangy spice mixture for a subtle play of flavors.* Charmoula *refers to the North African combination of ingredients in the marinade—though every country, town, and even family that makes* charmoula *creates its own special blend.*

- **1 lb large shrimp in shell (21 to 25 per lb), peeled, leaving tail fan attached, and deveined**
- **3 large shallots, finely chopped (1 cup)**
- **6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **1 small leek (white and pale green parts only), finely chopped**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 fresh serrano chile (optional), seeded and finely chopped**
- **¼ teaspoon sweet paprika**
- **⅛ teaspoon smoked paprika (optional)**
- **⅛ teaspoon turmeric**
- **½ teaspoon grated lemon zest**
- **½ cup fresh lemon juice**
- **2 teaspoons mild honey**
- **2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley or cilantro**

▸Cook shrimp in a large pot of boiling water until just cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain and cool.
▸Cook shallots in 2 tablespoons oil in a heavy medium skillet over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until very tender, about 8 minutes.
▸Meanwhile, wash leek (see Tips, page 130) and pat dry.
▸Add leek, garlic, and chile (if using) to shallots and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Add paprikas and turmeric and cook, stirring, 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in lemon zest and juice, honey, parsley, ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¼ cup oil.
▸Toss shrimp with sauce in a glass or ceramic bowl and marinate, covered and chilled, at least 8 hours. Season with salt and serve in sauce.

COOKS' NOTE: Shrimp can be marinated up to 1 day.

ALGERIAN FLATBREAD

MAKES 12 FLATBREADS
ACTIVE TIME: 1½ HR START TO FINISH: 2½ HR

There's character to spare in this layered flatbread, called msemmen *in Arabic. The dough is rubbed with spiced oil, rolled into a spiral, flattened, and then cooked on a griddle, for a flakiness that's surprisingly substantial. Zadi likes pairing the flatbread with an acidic dish, which is why we recommend it with the shrimp* charmoula *(recipe precedes); but, as he points out, the bread actually goes well with the entire meal, so plan on leaving it on the table from start to finish.*

- **3 cups finely ground whole-wheat flour (preferably Indian atta or King Arthur whole-wheat)**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **½ cup olive oil, divided**
- **1½ cups water**
- **1 teaspoon ground cumin**
- **1 teaspoon sweet paprika**
- **1 teaspoon turmeric**

MAKE DOUGH: Stir together flour, salt, and 2 tablespoons oil in a large bowl. Slowly stir in water until a soft dough forms. If necessary, add more water 1 tablespoon at a time. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead, dusting with just enough flour to keep dough from sticking, until smooth and elastic, about 15 minutes.
▸Form dough into a ball and coat with 2 tablespoons oil in a bowl. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let dough stand at warm room temperature 1 hour.
▸Stir together cumin, paprika, turmeric, and remaining ¼ cup oil in a small bowl.

FORM FLATBREADS: Divide dough into 12 equal pieces and, keeping remaining pieces covered with plastic wrap, flatten 1 piece of dough into a disk. Roll out disk as thinly as possible (into a 9-inch round) on a lightly floured surface with a 6-inch wooden dowel or a rolling pin. Spread 1 teaspoon spiced oil on dough with your fingertips, then roll up tightly into a long cylinder and coil into a tight spiral. Transfer to a large sheet of parchment paper, then loosely cover with plastic wrap.
▸Make 11 more spirals in same manner.

(Continued on page 98)

FOOD STYLING: RUTH COUSINEAU SET DESIGN: JEFFREY W. MILLER/ART DEPARTMENT FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION, SEE SHOPPING LIST



‘It’s easy to say, “Use ripe produce,” ’ says Zadi. ‘But what to do in February with turnips from storage? It’s very Algerian to use ingredients differently through the year to maximize their best qualities.’





This colorful slaw takes advantage of midwinter's brightest flavors. Opposite: Garlic bread crumbs and poppy seeds bring out turnips' sophisticated side.



Fragrant beignets, dusted with almond sugar, are reminiscent of soufflés; ginger, star anise, and cardamom lend clementines a heady perfume.


CFV

FINISH AND COOK FLATBREADS: Tape another sheet of parchment to a work surface and on it roll out 1 spiral of dough into a round approximately 6 inches in diameter. Heat a dry large cast-iron skillet or griddle over medium heat until hot, then cook flatbread, turning once, until puffed and browned in spots, 3 to 4 minutes total. Transfer to a plate and cover with a kitchen towel. Roll out and cook 11 more flatbreads, stacking them on plate.

COOKS' NOTES: Flatbreads are best when freshly made but can be cooked 1 day ahead, then cooled and kept, wrapped in foil, at room temperature. Reheat (in foil) in a 350°F oven or in a steamer about 10 minutes.

• Spirals of dough can be rolled out (but not cooked) 1 day ahead and chilled, layered between sheets of plastic wrap, then tightly wrapped, on a baking sheet. Bring to room temperature before cooking.

CHICKEN TAGINE WITH APRICOTS AND SPICED PINE NUTS

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR START TO FINISH: 2 HR

"There is no typical tagine *of Algeria—the country is too big, and the cooks are all too opinionated to agree on a typical dish," says Zadi. Still, this version epitomizes the spirit of Algerian cooking, with many flavors in perfect balance and no single ingredient overwhelming the others. And we found the savory, juicy meat (simmered with blood-orange preserves and apricots) and the spiced toasted pine nuts to be an absolutely delicious combination.*

FOR TAGINE

- **1 whole chicken (about 3½ lb)**
- **2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **3 large shallots, finely chopped (1 cup)**
- **1 tablespoon unsalted butter**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 tablespoon grated peeled ginger**
- **¼ teaspoon turmeric**
- **¼ teaspoon sweet paprika**
- **Pinch of saffron threads (optional)**
- **1 cup water**
- **2 tablespoons blood-orange preserves or bitter-orange marmalade**
- **1 (2-inch) cinnamon stick**
- **1 thyme sprig**
- **2 cilantro sprigs**
- **6 dried apricots, chopped**
- **1 tablespoon finely chopped cilantro or flat-leaf parsley**

FOR SPICED PINE NUTS

- **1 tablespoon olive oil**
- **¼ cup pine nuts**
- **¼ teaspoon turmeric**
- **¼ teaspoon sweet paprika**
- **Pinch of cayenne (optional)**

GARNISH: lemon wedges

MAKE TAGINE: Cut out and reserve wings and backbone from chicken. Cut breast in half through bone, then cut off legs and cut to separate into thighs and drumsticks (for a total of 6 serving pieces, not including wings and backbone). Pat chicken pieces dry and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. ▸Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat until it shimmers, then brown chicken breasts, skin sides down, without turning, 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Brown thighs and legs, turning once, 8 to 10 minutes, transferring to plate. Brown wings and backbone in same manner.

▸Cook shallots in butter with remaining tablespoon oil in a 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over medium heat, stirring frequently, until soft, 8 to 10 minutes. Add garlic, ginger, turmeric, and paprika and cook, stirring, 3 minutes.

▸Add chicken with any juices from plate, saffron (if using), and ½ teaspoon salt to shallot mixture and turn chicken to coat. Add water and bring to a boil, covered, then cook at a bare simmer, covered, 30 minutes.

▸Turn chicken and add orange preserves, cinnamon stick, thyme, cilantro sprigs, and apricots. Simmer, covered, 10 minutes. Uncover and simmer until chicken is very tender, 10 to 15 minutes more.

BROWN PINE NUTS WHILE CHICKEN COOKS: Heat oil in a small heavy skillet over medium heat until it shimmers, then stir in pine nuts, turmeric, paprika, and cayenne (if using) and cook, stirring frequently, until nuts are lightly browned, 1 to 2 minutes (watch carefully; they burn easily). Transfer to a small bowl.

TO SERVE: Transfer chicken to a platter and keep warm, covered. If sauce is not thick, boil, stirring occasionally, until reduced to about 1 cup. Discard herb sprigs, cinnamon stick, wings, and backbone. Stir in chopped cilantro and spoon sauce over chicken. Sprinkle with nuts.

BRAISED TURNIPS WITH POPPY-SEED BREAD CRUMBS

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 1¼ HR

Turnips are appreciated in Algeria not only for their faithful ubiquity but also for how their characteristics change throughout the winter—sweet and mild at the beginning and assertively earthy toward the end. Here, to emphasize their natural nuttiness and complexity, they're gently glazed with butter, then sprinkled with garlicky toasted bread crumbs and abundant poppy seeds.

FOR TURNIPS

- **3 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- **2 lb medium turnips (not Japanese), peeled and cut into 1-inch-thick wedges**
- **1½ cups water**
- **1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice**

FOR BREAD CRUMBS

- **2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 cup fine fresh bread crumbs from a baguette**
- **1 tablespoon poppy seeds**
- **1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley**

BRAISE TURNIPS: Melt butter in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, then add turnips, water, lemon juice, and ½ teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, 30 minutes. Increase heat to medium and stir turnips, then briskly simmer, uncovered, until all of liquid has evaporated and turnips are glazed and just tender, 20 to 35 minutes (they should be cooked through but still retain their shape).

MAKE BREAD CRUMBS WHILE TURNIPS COOK: Heat oil in a large heavy skillet over medium heat until it shimmers, then cook garlic, stirring, until pale golden, about 1 minute. Add bread crumbs and poppy seeds and cook, stirring frequently, until golden, 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in parsley and salt to taste. Just before serving, sprinkle bread crumbs over turnips.

COOKS' NOTES: Turnips can be braised 1 day ahead and chilled, uncovered, until cool, then covered. Reheat with a little water before serving.

• Bread-crumb mixture, without parsley, can be made 1 day ahead and kept in an airtight container at room temperature. Stir in parsley before using.

FENNEL AND CARROT SLAW WITH OLIVE DRESSING

SERVES 4
ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 50 MIN

"Ingredients are considered 'spices' in Algerian cooking," says Zadi, and this slaw illustrates his point, with olives contributing saltiness, carrots and sun-dried tomatoes adding sweetness, and fennel and parsley lending an incredible freshness. In the dead of winter, when vegetables are scarce, the clean flavors of this salad are as close as you're likely to get to a summertime farmers market.

2 medium fennel bulbs with fronds
5 carrots, coarsely grated
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup Spanish green olives, pitted and finely chopped
¼ teaspoon dried Aleppo chile or Espelette pepper flakes (optional), or to taste
6 sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, drained and very thinly sliced
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley

▸Chop enough fennel fronds to measure 3 tablespoons and reserve. Discard remaining fronds and stalks. Cut bulbs into thin matchsticks and toss with carrots in a bowl.
▸Whisk together lemon juice, vinegar, oil, olives, Aleppo chile (if using), and salt to taste and toss with vegetables. Chill, covered, at least 30 minutes (for flavors to develop).
▸Just before serving, stir in reserved fronds and sprinkle sun-dried tomatoes and parsley over slaw.
COOKS' NOTE: **Slaw, without fronds, tomatoes, and parsley, can be chilled up to 4 hours.**

ORANGE-SCENTED BEIGNETS

MAKES ABOUT 24 BEIGNETS
ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 45 MIN

Each of these incredibly tender golden puffs is like a warm little gift—break one open and be rewarded with the aroma of oranges and rose water. They're typically a yeast-leavened street food; Zadi's use of a choux paste "is a special touch, more for home cooking," he says. "And almond sugar belongs in the Algerian pastry lexicon."

1 cup all-purpose flour
½ cup water
½ cup fresh orange juice
½ teaspoon grated lemon zest
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1 stick unsalted butter
1 teaspoon Middle Eastern rose water
¼ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons plus ¼ cup sugar, divided
4 large eggs, at room temperature 30 minutes
About 4 cups vegetable oil for frying
¼ cup almond flour
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
EQUIPMENT: **a deep-fat thermometer**

▸Sift flour. Bring water, orange juice, lemon zest and juice, butter, rose water, salt, and 2 tablespoons sugar to a boil in a heavy medium saucepan. Add all-purpose flour all at once and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon 3 or 4 times. Remove from heat and stir until all of flour is incorporated and dough forms a ball. Cool 5 minutes.
▸Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition.
▸Preheat oven to 200°F with rack in middle.
▸Heat 2 inches oil to 360°F in a wide 4-quart pot over medium-high heat. ▸Meanwhile, stir together almond flour, cinnamon, and remaining ¼ cup sugar in a shallow bowl.
▸Working in batches of 6, gently drop tablespoons of dough into oil and fry, turning once, until puffed and golden-brown, 3 to 4 minutes per batch. Transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain briefly, then keep warm in a shallow baking pan in oven. Return oil to 360°F between batches.
▸Roll warm beignets in almond sugar and serve immediately.

CLEMENTINES IN GINGER SYRUP

SERVES 4
ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 3½ HR

Like cinnamon in this country, cardamom plays a starring role in Algerian sweets. Paired with star anise in a gingery syrup, it gives clementine slices an irresistible aroma, but the syrup would be just as wonderful over any kind of sliced fruit.

1½ cups water
1 cup sugar
¼ cup thinly sliced peeled ginger
4 green cardamom pods
3 whole star anise
6 clementines or mandarin oranges
½ cup pomegranate seeds (optional)

▸Bring water, sugar, ginger, cardamom, and star anise to a boil in a small saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring until sugar has dissolved, then simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes.
▸Remove from heat and let steep, covered, 15 minutes. Strain syrup through a sieve into a bowl, discarding solids. Chill, covered, until cold, at least 2 hours.
▸Cut peel from clementines, including all white pith, with a sharp knife, then cut fruit into ¼-inch-thick rounds and put in a serving bowl. Add syrup and chill, covered, at least 1 hour. Just before serving, sprinkle with pomegranate seeds (if using).
COOKS' NOTES: **Syrup can be chilled up to 2 weeks.**
• Fruit can be chilled in syrup up to 1 day.

MINT TEA

SERVES 4
ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 20 MIN

"Anyone who has spent time in any North African country has stories about mint tea so sweet that the glass sticks to their lips," says Zadi. His version, though a strong tea, is light on the sweetening.

4 cups water
½ cup packed mint leaves
2 tablespoons loose-leaf Chinese gunpowder tea or green tea
6 tablespoons sugar or mild honey, or to taste

▸Bring water to a vigorous boil.
▸Tear mint leaves and put in a teapot. Gently bruise mint with a wooden spoon to release oils, then add tea leaves, sugar, and boiling water. Cover and let steep 10 minutes.

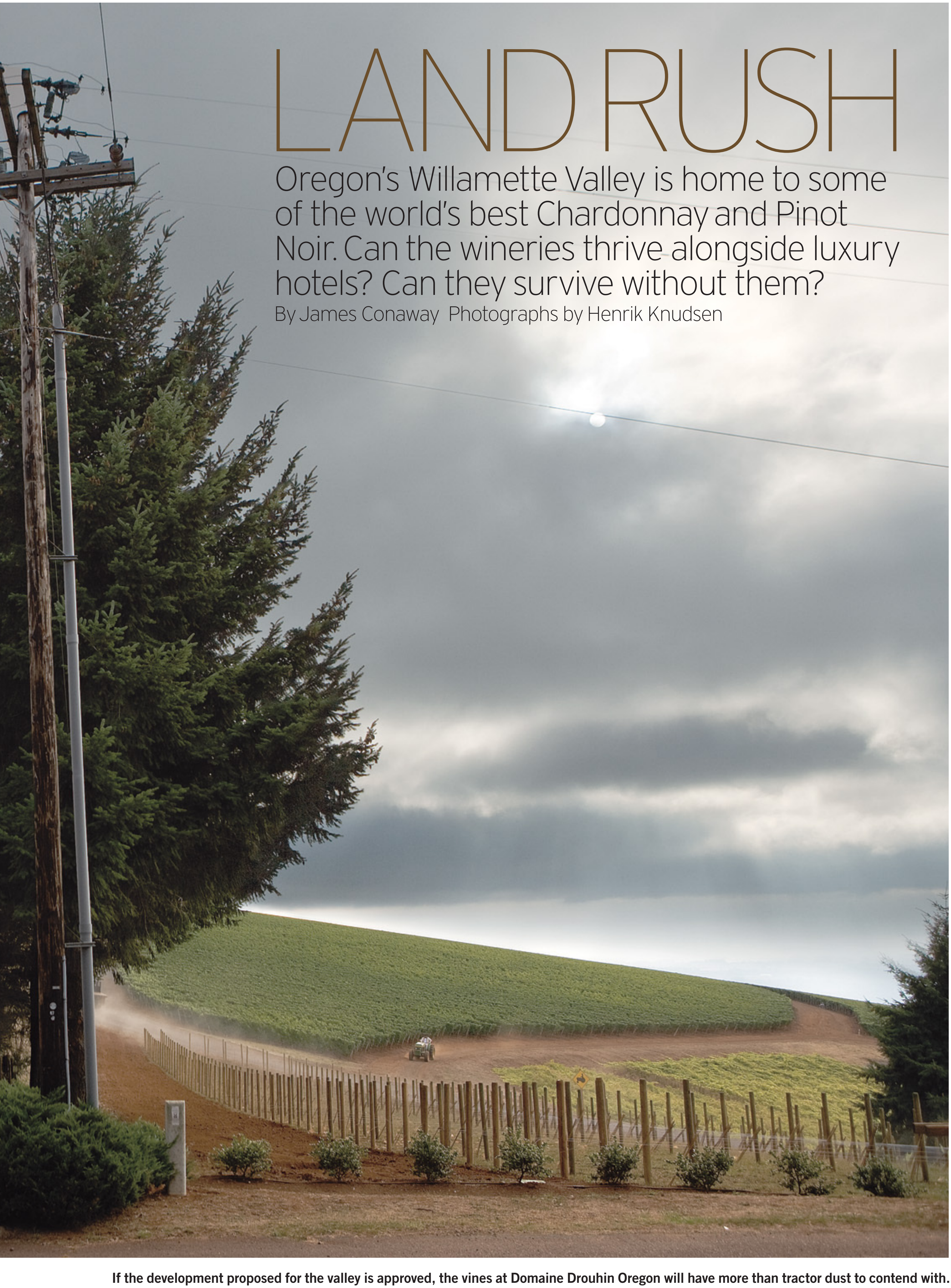
WINE ADVICE is on page 42.
For information about the specialty ingredients called for in this menu, see SHOPPING LIST, page 131.


View Ranch
Craig & Vicki

LAND RUSH

Oregon's Willamette Valley is home to some of the world's best Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Can the wineries thrive alongside luxury hotels? Can they survive without them?

By James Conaway Photographs by Henrik Knudsen



If the development proposed for the valley is approved, the vines at Domaine Drouhin Oregon will have more than tractor dust to contend with.



Jason Lett, above, has taken over winemaking duties at Eyrie from his father, David. Sokol Blosser Winery, below, is another Oregon pioneer.





Eyrie's vineyards make the area attractive to visitors, and visitors need accommodations. But special places need careful planning to stay special.





Robert Drouhin, above, spotted Oregon's potential in the '80s. The view from Sokol Blosser, below, may soon include a high-end hotel.





From Bethel Heights, above, you see fields of grain, cattle, and rolling countryside. Inside the barrel room at Sokol Blosser, below.



From this high, fallow hill, you can see much of Oregon's famous Willamette Valley wine region. Pampered Pinot Noir vines march off in neat formation, and far to the east the land rises toward the unseen Cascade Mountains. In between, scattered settlements, woods, and fields of great natural beauty act as a kind of visual agrarian homily.

Oddly enough, this bucolic setting, where swallows dip in the soft evening light, is now the site of social strife. Controversy was formerly limited to "how big the corn dogs would be at the annual Turkey Rama," in the words of Jason Lett, winemaker at The Eyrie Vineyards and a leading opponent of a five-star hotel planned for this hill. Unshaven and rail thin, in worn jeans and rimless glasses, he doesn't physically resemble his father, David, who left the Napa Valley back in the '60s—before it became as much a destination as an appellation—to prove that good Pinot could be grown in these Dundee Hills.

Lett père and his wife, Diana, founded Eyrie in 1966, and they entered their 1975 South Block Reserve Pinot Noir in the blind tasting held in Paris in 1979, which included the world's best Pinots, among them the wines of Robert Drouhin, president of Maison Joseph Drouhin, in Beaune. Eyrie was third, inspiring disbelief and consternation overseas and etching Oregon Pinot onto the vinous world map. Lett and two other pioneers, David Adelsheim and Richard Ponzi (they called themselves "the Three Musketeers"), began to travel together across America, proselytizing to the trade about their wines.

Comity and mutual assistance were taken for granted in those days, when all the Willamette vintners could fit into Nick's, a restaurant in McMinnville. Today, the three veteran vintners oppose development on land suitable for growing grapes, with Adelsheim pointing out that it's agriculture that attracted tourists in the first place, and that to sacrifice vineyards is to harm both. Of the plan to build a hotel in the midst of agriculture, David Lett says: "People turned out to be greedy and dumb."

Many narrative lines converge on this particular hill, which has disproportionate historical provenance, as well as considerable value—being surrounded by some of the best, most expensive vineyards in the Willamette Valley—and one of the best views. Halfway down is the Douglas fir where nesting red-tailed hawks provided the inspiration for the name Eyrie. Jason Lett grew up almost in that tree's shadow, eating Pacific staples his father procured by trading away Eyrie's Pinot Blanc—"it went great with salmon and Dungeness crab"—when money was tight. Jason took over as winemaker recently and today successfully emulates his father's style of wine. "We consider our Pinot the enological equivalent of sushi," he says, not mentioning the fact that he also makes a Pinot Noir of his own, BlackCap, that's Eyrie's more concentrated kin. But that's another story.

Look to the left and you see the roof and closely spaced vines of Domaine Drouhin Oregon, evidence that Robert Drouhin himself decided, after the fateful 1979 tasting, that if this New World terroir was serious stuff, he should buy some. Today, D.D.O. produces—ironically—the more up-front, luscious-style Pinot Noir, while Eyrie, devoid of new oak, is leaner and more classically structured. That, too, is another story.

Farther down the hill sits the Sokol Blosser Winery, founded by Bill Blosser and Susan Sokol Blosser in 1977. They, along with Adelsheim and David Lett, helped persuade Yamhill County to replace residential zoning with agricultural, so vines could be planted instead of houses. Now Sokol Blosser is run by their children, Alex and Alison—"yin and yang," says Alex, 34, whose business card reads "Second Generation Winegrower." But they agree about the need to protect the landscape's status quo ante. "The American ethic of 'I can do whatever I want with my property' has got to change," says Alex, referring to the prospect of a hotel rising from green waves of *Vitis vinifera*. And he echoes the sentiment heard often here: "We don't want the Napa-fication of the Willamette."

The Willamette isn't Napa, and it never will be (though some Oregon vintners would love to see a bit of Napa's restrictive zoning). It's too large, for one thing, and too diverse. Two hundred and fifty commercial crops are grown, whereas Napa's trellised monoculture occupies every square foot of land that can be planted with grapes. By contrast, the views from wineries spread around the northern Willamette—from Elk Cove to Bethel Heights, from Amity to Cristom—are of fields of grain, cattle, woodlots, and rolling country with some vineyards and mercifully few McMansions. Even with the escalating real-estate values here, Napa land prices are much higher.

The Dundee Hills come closest to the Napa Valley analogy: many wineries, both large and boutique, concentrated wealth, a couple of aspiring châteaux, and traffic jams on Highway 99, down on the valley floor. The road resembles Napa's linear parking lot, Highway 29, but here more of the cars are bound for the Spirit Mountain Casino than for tasting rooms. Highway 99 passes through the towns of Newberg, Dundee, Lafayette, and McMinnville, which has a well-preserved historic downtown that attracts tourists and an occasional limo bound for Nick's. But there are relatively few accommodations, and visitors usually return to Portland to sleep.

McMinnville, Newberg, and, just to the north, Carlton may have the cunningly restored Victorian residences and gentrified shops that are de rigueur in Napa's Yountville and St. Helena, but as charming as parts of these communities are, they remain vestigial farm towns where life and livelihood share a palpable connection, with none of Napa's air of utter separation from menial labor. They are, however, in various stages of becoming something else, though nobody seems to know exactly what.

Burnished B&Bs have sprung up in the Dundee Hills, too, including the Wine Country Farm B&B, with its view of Do-

THE DETAILS

STAYING THERE

The Willamette Valley will certainly have more accommodations in the near future. In the meantime, **Hotel Oregon** (310 N.E. Evans St., McMinnville; 888-472-8427; from $50) has all the quirky charm you'd expect from a McMenamins property (the Ninth Annual UFO Festival is May 16–17). There are several bed-and-breakfasts in the area, including **Wine Country Farm B&B** (6855 Breyman Orchards Rd., Dayton; 800-261-3446; from $130), an authentic Victorian in the Dundee Hills. **Black Walnut Inn & Vineyard** (9600 N.E. Worden Hill Rd., Dundee; 866-429-4114; from $200) is a Tuscan-style villa on the grounds of a working winery.

EATING THERE

Nick's Italian Cafe (521 N.E. 3rd St., McMinnville; 503-434-4471) has a wine list befitting a wine-country pioneer and food to match. The local focus at **The Painted Lady Restaurant** (201 S. College, Newberg; 503-538-3850) extends from menu to the wine list. **Tina's Restaurant** (760 N. Hwy. 99W, Dundee; 503-538-8880) also features local ingredients. For breakfast, try **Crescent Café** (526 N.E. 3rd St., McMinnville; 503-435-2655). **La Rambla** (238 N.E. 3rd St., McMinnville; 503-435-2126) has good Spanish food. Winemakers and vineyard workers are often seen at **Martha's Tacos & More** (440 3rd St., Lafayette; 503-864-3304). *—J.C.*

maine Drouhin Oregon and, perhaps soon, that new hotel. The B&B's owner, Joan Davenport, a self-described registered Republican, is outspoken about the supposed urgent need for luxurious accommodations on the hill: "Anyone with three trillion dollars and a good PR firm can say something and people will think it's true."

Her most expensive rooms are $205 a night, and "up there, the *least* expensive will be $500." Competition isn't the main problem, she insists, but dwindling water, since well levels all around are dropping. "I'm not against the hotel, just against it being in prime vineyard land."

The ascendancy in quality and price of American wine, the beauty of vineyards, and the explosion in disposable income among some Americans has created an apparently unappeasable appetite for the "vintner lifestyle." This could once have been described as living with nature and working for a decent crop of grapes to finance the next one. But the new image of the "vintner" is closer to that of a Robert Drouhin than a David Lett, and along with this increased professionalism comes a greater desire on the part of fans for full-service accommodations in the middle of the action.

Enter David Kahn, in pristine white sneakers, stepping from his wife's red Lexus, which he uses as an extension of his Portland office. If his manner is a bit proprietary, it's because he and his investors have development rights on the hilltop. Kahn wants nothing more, he insists, than to bring world-class R&R into the coveted heart of Oregon Pinot-dom and to help everybody in the process.

"It can be done here," he says, meaning that a five-star hotel and spa would prosper in the midst of so much rural eye candy, and no one doubts it. He lovingly refers to his proposed hotel as "the Auberge du Soleil of the Willamette," referring to that $525-minimum-a-night "inn" that clings to a mountainside above Napa Valley, where tourism has come to rival—and even challenge—agriculture. Kahn lauds the number of private jets that he has seen in the air over Napa, as well as the area's other high-end affectations, including the deluxe deli and condiment boutique Oakville Grocery, which he calls "the greatest place on earth." Such enterprises greatly stimulate the local economy, he points out, and would do the same here.

No one doubts that, either. But Napa's Auberge and Oakville Grocery are both grandfathered, meaning they existed before that county's more stringent zoning came into effect. Also, the land in Napa Valley where the Auberge sits couldn't be farmed by any stretch of the imagination. This hill in Dundee, however, could support vines, despite its altitude, as proven by those growing all around it.

Oregon has long prided itself on the preservation of its agriculture. Long-standing land-use laws prohibit commercial projects in the midst of farmland because they interfere with farming and permanently remove the land from agricultural use. Additional issues with Kahn's proposed hotel include the falling water table, increased traffic, sewage, various sorts of other waste—including, possibly, brine brought up from deep marine sediments where well diggers would likely have to go—and permanently altered views from below.

Two dozen vintners formed the Vintners' Coalition for Economic Progress (VinCEP) in 2006 and signed a letter opposing Kahn's project in its proposed location. But Yamhill County's three-person governing board of commissioners granted him an exception anyway. The sole Democrat on the board, Mary Stern, a former lawyer, says she had no choice but to vote for the exception because Kahn and his lawyer proved to her satisfaction that a five-star hotel could succeed nowhere else in the county. "If I could have voted against it," she says, "I would have."

But VinCEP's lawyer in Portland, Bill Kabeiseman, says that the county has no idea where such high-impact facilities should go or how they should function: "It shouldn't be done on an ad hoc basis. We need a comprehensive plan."

Everyone involved agrees that an Auberge du Soleil wouldn't work down on the highway. Jason Lett points out that construction has begun on Springbrook, an 85-bed luxury inn and spa inside neighboring Newberg's urban-growth boundary, where it can be reached by the town's water and other services. It also will include 50 acres of park, multiuse trails, and other access for the community. "Kahn's proposal passed," says Lett, "simply because a lot of people with a lot of money want to vacation in wine country."

Among the hotel's other opponents is Domaine Drouhin Oregon's managing director, David Millman. "The hotel's a great idea," Millman says, over a glass of Joseph Drouhin Chablis on D.D.O.'s deck, "but in the wrong place. Kahn couldn't do this in Burgundy, or in Napa. I want to be in a position of welcoming and guiding new hotels and restaurants, because development's coming—I want shovels in the ground, not lawyers in court—but we still have a shot at guiding how it's done."

The county commissioners' ruling was challenged by VinCEP, went to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals, and ended up in the Oregon Court of Appeals. After deliberating for many white-knuckled weeks, in August 2007 the court notified the parties that it needed more time, an indication of the importance of the case and the novel questions it raised. At the time, Kahn said he detected a "softening" among his adversaries and foresaw a compromise that would put a less grand version of the hotel on the same hill. "Someday," he added, "people will be coming around to thank me."

However, last October the court sent the application for the hotel back to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals for further consideration. Both protection of farmland and growing urbanization had to be addressed in granting such exceptions, the court said, and Yamhill County hadn't done that. It needed, in short, to come up with a formal plan, which requires more time and, of course, money.

These days, vintners in the Willamette fret less over the state of land-use law in Oregon. The notorious Measure 37 referendum, which passed in 2004 and allowed some residential development in agricultural zones after a 30-year hiatus, was countered by Measure 49, which passed overwhelmingly in a referendum last November. It patched up much of the damage done by Measure 37 and showed that most Oregonians still care deeply about what happens in the countryside. "I'm very pleased," said Jason Lett, "that my home county—ornery, conservative Yamhill—came in at sixty-three percent in favor."

Meanwhile, the prospects of a luxury spa capping a famous hill in Dundee have dimmed considerably.

WINE LIST

Here are eight of Jim Conaway's favorite recent releases from the Willamette Valley. A good source for Oregon wines is Avalon Wine (541-752-7418; avalonwine.com).

Adelsheim Vineyard Caitlin's Reserve Chardonnay 2005 ($36)
Amity Vineyards Bass Hill/Schouten Pinot Noir 2005 ($40)
Bethel Heights Vineyard Estate Grown Pinot Noir 2006 ($30)
Cristom Vineyards Jessie Vineyard Pinot Noir 2005 ($50)
Domaine Drouhin Oregon "Laurène" Pinot Noir 2004 ($65)
Elk Cove Vineyards Pinot Gris 2006 ($18)
The Eyrie Vineyards Estate Reserve Pinot Noir 2001 ($35)
Hamacher Wines Pinot Noir 2004 ($45)

For a RECIPE, see page 128.

SUNDAY SUPPER



When it's cold outside, a laid-back night at home is its own kind of special occasion. A stick-to-the ribs dinner, including crowd-pleasers like meatloaf and chocolate cake, seconds the notion.

Recipes by Ian Knauer Photographs by Quentin Bacon



When everyone's home, the best kind of dinner is one that wafts welcoming aromas throughout the house as it cooks. This menu does the trick.





Don't tell: The secret to this luscious loaf is the chopped bacon and prunes in the mix. Scalloped potatoes have no secrets; they're just wonderful.

MEATLOAF

SERVES 6 WITH LEFTOVERS

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 1½ HR

This is the perfect antidote to the Sunday blues, not least because there will be enough left over to pack sandwiches for Monday's lunch. A mix of beef, pork, and bacon ensures meatiness, with Worcestershire sauce, chopped prunes, and cider vinegar added for good balance and occasional suggestions of sweetness. Because the loaf is baked without a loaf pan, there's plenty of well-browned crust to go around.

1 cup fine fresh bread crumbs (from 2 slices firm white sandwich bread)
⅓ cup whole milk
1 medium onion, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium celery rib, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, finely chopped
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
¼ teaspoon ground allspice
¼ lb bacon (about 4 slices), chopped
½ cup pitted prunes, chopped
1½ lb ground beef chuck
½ lb ground pork (not lean)
2 large eggs
⅓ cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
GARNISH: cooked bacon

▸Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in middle.
▸Soak bread crumbs in milk in a large bowl. ▸Meanwhile, cook onion, garlic, celery, and carrot in butter in a large heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes. Cover skillet and reduce heat to low, then cook until carrot is tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in Worcestershire sauce, vinegar, allspice, 2 teaspoons salt, and 1½ teaspoons pepper. Add to bread-crumb mixture.
▸Finely chop bacon and prunes in a food processor, then add to onion mixture along with beef, pork, eggs, and parsley and mix together with your hands.
▸Pack mixture into a 9- by 5-inch oval loaf in a 13- by 9-inch shallow baking dish or pan.
▸Bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted into center of meatloaf registers 155°F, 1 to 1¼ hours. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.
COOKS' NOTE: Cooked meatloaf keeps, chilled, 3 days.

SCALLOPED POTATOES

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 1¾ HR

There's no question: If meatloaf, then potatoes. These have all the comfort of mashed, but with a nice texture from the potato slices and from being baked in cream. And they can go in the oven along with the meatloaf, so dinner will be ready all at once.

¾ teaspoon grated nutmeg
3 lb large boiling potatoes (about 6)
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
1½ cups heavy cream
¾ cup whole milk

▸Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in upper third. Generously butter a 2½-quart shallow baking dish (not glass).
▸Stir together nutmeg, 2 teaspoons salt, and ¾ teaspoon pepper.
▸Peel and thinly slice potatoes. Layer potatoes in baking dish, overlapping slightly and sprinkling each layer with some of salt mixture and some of butter. Pour cream and milk over potatoes, pressing down gently to submerge potatoes in liquid.
▸Cover with foil and bake until potatoes are tender, 1 to 1¼ hours.
▸Remove gratin from oven and discard foil. Turn broiler on and broil gratin 2 to 3 inches from heat until top is browned in spots, 3 to 5 minutes. ▸Let stand 10 minutes before serving.
COOKS' NOTE: Potatoes are best the day they're made but can be baked and broiled 2 days ahead and chilled, uncovered, until cool, then covered. Reheat, covered, in a 350°F oven about 40 minutes.

CARROTS AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 20 MIN

Who knew? These two humble winter staples actually have a natural affinity, playing off each other's best qualities.

2 tablespoons chopped shallot (from 1 medium)
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
1 lb carrots, cut diagonally into ½-inch-thick pieces
1 lb Brussels sprouts, halved lengthwise
⅓ cup water
1 tablespoon cider vinegar

▸Cook shallot in 2 tablespoons butter in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, 1 to 2 minutes. Add carrots, Brussels sprouts, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to brown, 3 to 4 minutes.
▸Add water and cover skillet, then cook over medium-high heat until vegetables are tender, 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in vinegar, remaining tablespoon butter, and salt and pepper to taste.
COOKS' NOTE: Vegetables can be cut 1 hour ahead and kept at room temperature.

BIG GREEN SALAD

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 10 MIN

Something green and crisp is in order, and this simple salad is just the thing. A tangy from-scratch honey-mustard dressing will make salad eaters out of even the youngest at the table.

2 medium heads romaine
½ seedless cucumber
2 celery ribs, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon mild honey
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

▸Tear romaine into bite-size pieces and put in a salad bowl. Halve cucumber lengthwise, then thinly slice diagonally and add to romaine along with celery. ▸Whisk together remaining ingredients with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a small bowl until emulsified. Add to salad and toss to coat.
COOKS' NOTE: Romaine can be washed and dried 1 day ahead and chilled, wrapped in dampened paper towels, in a sealed bag.

For the DEVIL DOG CAKE recipe, see page 131.

FOOD STYLING: PAUL GRIMES SET DESIGN: JEFFREY W. MILLER/ART DEPARTMENT WARDROBE: MELISSA DAMELIO HAIR AND MAKEUP: CHICO MITSUI FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION, SEE SHOPPING LIST



A butter and cider-vinegar glaze marries the subtle sweetness of Brussels sprouts and carrots in this why-didn't-I-think-of-that combination.



When was the last time you baked a cake for no reason? Putting this one together is barely more involved than making brownies, but it will elicit happy gasps at the table like no brownie ever has.



There's something about devil's food cake with fluffs of marshmallow frosting that brings out the kid in everyone.



SWEET SOLACE



NO NEED TO MOURN SUMMER'S BERRIES. THESE WINTER FRUIT DESSERTS ARE JUST AS STELLAR. RECIPES BY RUTH COUSINEAU   PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROMULO YANES

Sun-splashed: Fresh pineapple brightens a galette. Opposite: Raisins, Calvados, and caramelized Gala apples give depth to a cobbler.

FRUIT INFUSES THE WARMTH OF THE TROPICS INTO THE COLDEST SEASON—A TAPIOCA FLIES SOUTH WITH ORANGES, A GALETTE GOES HAWAIIAN WITH PINEAPPLES, AND A CHOCOLATE WALNUT CAKE PEELS OUT WITH BANANAS.

BANANA CHOCOLATE WALNUT CAKE

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN   START TO FINISH: 2½ HR

A great way to use very ripe bananas, this easy-to-make cake incorporates everything you love about banana bread and adds a few more favorites—chocolate, walnuts, and cinnamon—for good measure. (It's also much more tender, with a light, moist crumb.)

2¼ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 stick unsalted butter, softened, plus 2 tablespoons, melted and cooled
1 cup sugar, divided
2 large eggs
1¼ cups mashed very ripe bananas (about 3 medium)
⅔ cup plain whole-milk yogurt
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 (3½- to 4-oz) bar 70%-cacao bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
1 cup walnuts (3 oz), toasted (see Tips, page 130), cooled, and coarsely chopped
½ teaspoon cinnamon

▸Preheat oven to 375°F with rack in middle. Butter a 9-inch square cake pan.
▸Stir together flour, baking soda, and salt. ▸Beat together softened butter (1 stick) and ¾ cup sugar in a medium bowl with an electric mixer at medium speed until pale and fluffy, then beat in eggs 1 at a time until blended. Beat in bananas, yogurt, and vanilla (mixture will look curdled).
▸With mixer at low speed, add flour mixture and mix until just incorporated.
▸Toss together chocolate, nuts, cinnamon, melted butter, and remaining ¼ cup sugar in a small bowl. Spread half of banana batter in cake pan and sprinkle with half of chocolate mixture. Spread remaining batter evenly over filling and sprinkle remaining chocolate mixture on top.
▸Bake until cake is golden and a wooden pick inserted in center of cake comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool cake in pan on a rack 30 minutes, then turn out onto rack and cool completely, right side up.
COOKS' NOTE: Cake can be made 2 days ahead and kept in an airtight container at room temperature.

ORANGE TAPIOCA PUDDING

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR   START TO FINISH: 2 HR

The unique texture of tapioca—creamy pudding studded with soft, slightly chewy pearls—inspires intense devotion among fans. This version gets lively citrus flavor from four incarnations of orange: zest, juice, liqueur, and fresh pieces of the fruit.

2 navel oranges
2 tablespoons orange liqueur such as Grand Marnier or Cointreau
⅓ cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
⅓ cup tapioca pearls (preferably ⅛ inch; not quick-cooking)
3 cups whole milk
2 large eggs, separated
½ cup chilled heavy cream

▸Finely grate enough orange zest to measure 1 teaspoon. Cut remaining peel and white pith from oranges with a sharp knife, then discard. Cut segments free from membranes, letting them drop into a bowl, then squeeze enough juice from membranes to measure 3 tablespoons, adding it to segments. Add liqueur and 2 tablespoons sugar and toss with segments. Let macerate 20 minutes.
▸While orange segments macerate, cook tapioca, milk, grated zest, ⅓ cup sugar, and ⅛ teaspoon salt in a heavy medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring, until sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally, then reduce heat to medium-low and gently simmer, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 10 minutes. Drain orange segments in a sieve over saucepan to add liquid to tapioca (reserve segments), then gently simmer, stirring constantly, until tapioca pearls are completely translucent, 20 to 30 minutes.
▸Whisk together egg yolks in a metal bowl, then gradually whisk hot pudding into yolks. Quick-chill by setting bowl in an ice bath and stirring occasionally until cool (pudding will be very thick).
▸Beat egg whites with a pinch of salt using an electric mixer until they just hold soft peaks. Add remaining tablespoon sugar and beat whites until they just hold stiff peaks. ▸Beat cream in another bowl with cleaned beaters until it just holds stiff peaks. Fold whites, then cream, into pudding gently but thoroughly.
▸Divide orange segments among 6 glasses, ramekins, or small bowls and top with pudding. Chill, covered, at least 1 hour.
COOKS' NOTES: The egg whites in this recipe are not cooked, which may be of concern if salmonella is a problem in your area.
• Tapioca pudding can be chilled up to 3 days.

FOOD STYLING: RUTH COUSINEAU   PROP STYLING: HALEY THURSHWELL





Fruitful ideas for the meal's finale, clockwise from top left: Crunchy but tender banana chocolate walnut cake; smooth, bubble-filled orange tapioca pudding; incredibly easy pear johnnycake; and inky, rich prunes in Port served with crisp toasted-almond cookies.





WINTER WORKHORSES SWEETEN UP THEIR PLAIN-JANE REPUTATION: PRUNES BATHE IN PORT, APPLES INVITE CALVADOS INTO A COBBLER, AND ANJOU PEARS ELEVATE JOHNNYCAKE FROM BREAKFAST TO LATE NIGHT.

PRUNES IN WINE WITH TOASTED-ALMOND COOKIES

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 1 HR (NOT INCLUDING MAKING COOKIES)

Prunes take on a velvety texture in this Port sauce. The resulting syrup is silky and sweet, with a tropical vanilla fragrance.

1¼ lb pitted prunes
2 cups ruby Port
2 cups dry red wine
¾ cup sugar
½ vanilla bean, split

ACCOMPANIMENTS: toasted-almond cookies (recipe follows); crème fraîche, sour cream, or ice cream

▸Stir together all ingredients in a heavy medium saucepan until sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil, then simmer, uncovered, gently stirring occasionally, until liquid is reduced by half, about 25 minutes. ▸Remove from heat and cool until barely warm or room temperature. Discard vanilla bean.

COOKS' NOTE: Prunes can be cooked 3 days ahead and chilled, covered. Bring to room temperature before serving.

TOASTED-ALMOND COOKIES

MAKES ABOUT 16 COOKIES

ACTIVE TIME: 1¼ HR START TO FINISH: 2 HR

Ultra-thin and wonderfully crisp, these cookies pack plenty of flavor into a slim package. We like to pair them with the prunes in wine (recipe precedes) or the orange tapioca pudding (page 118), but they're also wonderful on their own or with a hot cup of coffee.

2 large egg whites, at room temperature 30 minutes
½ stick unsalted butter, softened
½ cup sugar
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
⅛ teaspoon salt
3 oz sliced almonds (1 cup), toasted (see Tips, page 130) and cooled

EQUIPMENT: a 17- by 11-inch nonstick bakeware liner such as Silpat

▸Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in middle.
▸Blend together egg whites, butter, sugar, flour, vanilla, and salt in a food processor just until smooth.
▸Put liner on a baking sheet. Using 2 teaspoons batter per cookie, make 6 mounds, spacing them 3 inches apart, then spread into 4½- to 5-inch rounds with back of a spoon (they will be very thin but try to spread batter as evenly as possible). Sprinkle each round with about ½ tablespoon almonds. ▸Bake cookies until golden-brown, 7 to 9 minutes. Let stand on baking sheet 1 minute, then, working quickly, remove each cookie with a metal spatula and drape over a rolling pin or a wine bottle (you will need 2 pins or bottles) to form a curved shape. Let stand until crisp, about 20 minutes, then transfer to a rack to cool completely.
▸Cool liner and baking sheet before making more cookies.

COOKS' NOTE: Cookies keep in an airtight container at room temperature 5 days.

PEAR MAPLE JOHNNYCAKE

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MIN START TO FINISH: 1¼ HR (INCLUDES COOLING)

Looking for a fast weeknight dessert? Johnnycake—essentially a cross between a pancake and corn bread—isn't fancy, but it's delicious when made with delicate pears and maple syrup.

1 stick unsalted butter
2 tablespoons sugar
4 firm-ripe Anjou pears, peeled, halved lengthwise, and cored
½ teaspoon grated nutmeg, divided
1 cup all-purpose flour
¾ cup stone-ground cornmeal (preferably white)
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup whole milk
¼ cup pure maple syrup (preferably dark amber or Grade B)
2 large eggs, lightly beaten

ACCOMPANIMENTS: pure maple syrup (for drizzling); sour cream

▸Preheat oven to 400°F with rack in middle.
▸Melt butter in a 12-inch nonstick skillet. Brush a 9-inch cake pan (2 inches deep) with 1 tablespoon melted butter and reserve 6 tablespoons in a small bowl. Sprinkle sugar evenly over butter remaining in skillet. Arrange pears, cut sides up, in

skillet and sprinkle with ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg. Cook over medium heat 5 minutes, then turn pears over and sprinkle with ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg. Cook until liquid pears give off has evaporated and cut sides are lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes more.

▸Transfer pears, cut sides down, to cake pan.

▸Whisk together flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon nutmeg in a bowl. Whisk in milk, syrup, eggs, and reserved butter just until smooth. Pour over pears and bake until golden and a wooden pick inserted in center of cake comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool in pan on a rack 15 minutes, then run a knife around edge of cake to loosen and invert onto a platter.

APPLE COBBLER

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 35 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 HR (INCLUDES COOLING TO WARM)

Like a classic tarte Tatin, *this cobbler begins with apples being caramelized in a rich mix of butter and sugar, but we've upped the ante by adding apple brandy and raisins. Tender biscuit rounds take the place of traditional pastry to create a true home-style dessert. (And a drizzle of cream never hurts.)*

½ cup golden raisins
½ cup Calvados or apple brandy
3½ lb Gala apples (7 to 8)
1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
½ stick unsalted butter
¾ cup granulated sugar
1½ cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
Rounded ¼ teaspoon salt
¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon heavy cream, divided
1½ tablespoons turbinado sugar such as Sugar in the Raw for sprinkling

EQUIPMENT: **a well-seasoned 10-inch cast-iron skillet; a 2¼-inch round cookie cutter**

ACCOMPANIMENT: **heavy cream**

▸Simmer raisins and Calvados in a small saucepan over medium heat until liquid is reduced to 3 tablespoons, about 4 minutes. Remove from heat and let macerate, covered, 30 minutes.

▸Meanwhile, preheat oven to 425°F with rack in middle.

▸While raisins macerate, peel and core apples, then cut into 1-inch pieces. Toss with lemon juice.

▸Melt butter in skillet and sprinkle granulated sugar evenly over it. Add apples along with raisins and Calvados (skillet will be full). Cook apples over medium-high heat, without stirring, until juices are deep golden and bubbling, 18 to 23 minutes (don't worry if juices color unevenly). Transfer skillet to oven and bake, uncovered, 20 minutes.

MAKE BISCUIT TOPPING WHILE APPLES BAKE: Stir together flour, baking powder, and salt, then add ¾ cup cream and stir just until a dough forms. Gather dough into a ball and transfer to a lightly floured surface. Gently knead 6 times, then pat dough into an 8-inch round. Cut out as many rounds as possible with lightly floured cutter. Gather scraps and pat out, then cut out more rounds. (You will have about 12.)

ASSEMBLE AND BAKE COBBLER: Arrange biscuits on apples about ½ inch apart and brush tops with remaining tablespoon cream. Sprinkle with turbinado sugar and bake until biscuits are puffed and golden, about 15 minutes. Cool in skillet 20 minutes before serving.

COOKS' NOTE: **Cobbler is best when freshly made but can be baked 3 hours ahead and reheated in a 350°F oven.**

PINEAPPLE GALETTE

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 2¾ HR (INCLUDES CHILLING DOUGH AND COOLING GALETTE)

Fresh pineapple conjures up images of sunshine, so what better way to cheer up a winter day than with a galette made with golden yellow wedges layered over buttery pastry? Today's pineapples tend to be quite sweet, so just a hint of cinnamon and sugar is all you'll need to bring out their bright flavor.

FOR PASTRY

1½ cups all-purpose flour
Rounded teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
1 stick cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
3 to 5 tablespoons ice water

FOR TOPPING

3 tablespoons semolina (sometimes called semolina flour; see Shopping List, page 131)
1 (4-lb) fresh pineapple (preferably labeled extra-sweet), peeled, quartered, cored, and cut crosswise into ¼-inch-thick wedges
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted
3 tablespoons sugar
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon whole milk

ACCOMPANIMENT: **vanilla ice cream**

MAKE PASTRY DOUGH: Blend together flour, salt, sugar, and butter with your fingertips or a pastry blender (or pulse in a food processor) just until mixture resembles coarse meal with some small (roughly pea-size) butter lumps. Drizzle with 3 tablespoons ice water and gently stir with a fork until incorporated.

▸Squeeze a small handful: If it doesn't hold together, add more ice water, ½ tablespoon at a time, stirring (or pulsing) until just incorporated, then test again. (Don't overwork, or pastry will be tough.)

▸Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface and divide into 4 portions. With heel of your hand, smear each portion once or twice in a forward motion to distribute fat. Gather dough together, with a pastry or bench scraper if you have one, and form into a 6-inch disk. Chill, wrapped in plastic wrap, until firm, at least 1 hour.

MAKE TOPPING AND BAKE GALETTE: Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in middle.

▸Roll out dough on a lightly floured surface with a floured rolling pin into a 15- by 11-inch rectangle and transfer to a large baking sheet. Chill until slightly firm but still flexible, about 5 minutes.

▸Sprinkle semolina evenly over dough, leaving a 1-inch border all around, then arrange pineapple wedges on dough, overlapping them slightly, in 3 lengthwise rows. Brush pineapple with melted butter. Mix together sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over pineapple. Fold border of dough inward over outer edge of pineapple and brush with milk.

▸Bake galette 30 minutes, then cover loosely with a sheet of foil and bake until filling is bubbling and pastry is golden, 25 to 30 minutes more.

▸Discard foil and cool galette, uncovered, on baking sheet on a rack 20 minutes, then slide off baking sheet onto rack to cool completely.

COOKS' NOTES: **Dough can be chilled up to 1 day.**

• Pineapple can be cut into wedges 1 day ahead and chilled in a sealed bag.

• Galette can be made 3 hours ahead and kept, uncovered, at room temperature.

KITCHEN NOTEBOOK

CHOCOLATE CAKE IS THE LITTLE BLACK DRESS OF THE DESSERT WORLD: IT POSSESSES AN INNATE GLAMOUR THAT NEVER GOES OUT OF STYLE. ONE OF OUR FAVORITES IS THIS MERINGUE-AND-MOUSSE NUMBER FROM PASTRY CHEF FRANÇOIS PAYARD. HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



HOW TO MAKE A SHOWSTOPPER: CHOCOLATE MERINGUE MOUSSE CAKE

François Payard—a third-generation master pâtissier transplanted from the south of France to the Upper East Side of Manhattan—stocks the elegant windows and display cases at his eponymous patisserie and bistro with equally elegant (and delicious) cakes and pastries. The beauty of the one he's making here (turn the page for the recipe) is that it has just two main elements: meringue and mousse, layered together. Sublime and relatively simple, we thought—just right for anyone's truelove. (1) The key to meringue is to work quickly. Payard makes what is called a Swiss meringue by whisking egg whites and sugar together over a pan of simmering water until the whites are warm and foamy and the sugar is dissolved. It's one of the most compact and stable types of meringues (the sugar is incorporated differently in each), so this cake can be made a day ahead and refrigerated—resulting in a happy Valentine's Day for the cook as well. (2) Payard transfers the whites to the bowl of a stand mixer and beats them until stiff. (3) After folding in the cocoa powder (the meringue deflates a bit, but don't panic), he starts piping meringue onto pre-drawn templates. Only fill the pastry bag two-thirds full, and relax (but don't dawdle) while you're piping. Let the meringue fall smoothly from the tip, as Payard does. (4) To finish off each meringue stick, stop the flow of meringue by lifting up the tip of the pastry bag and giving it a little jerk. (5) Payard's technique for making an egg-safe mousse was a revelation: He cooks the eggs with a sugar syrup until they just begin to curdle; the finished mousse is dense rather than airy, and rich in flavor. (6) To fold the melted chocolate and whipped cream into the egg mixture, start in the center and sweep the spatula toward you, underneath the batter, then around the side. —*Jane Daniels Lear*

ROMULO YANES





After layering his baked meringue ovals with mousse and raspberry jam ("for a bit of acidity"), Payard builds a corral of meringue sticks around the perimeter and scatters the chopped leftovers on top. The sticks, which were crisp to the point of hardness after baking, absorb moisture from the mousse while the cake sits in the fridge. A day later, textures and flavors marry together into an irresistible whole. Before serving, sprinkle with confectioners sugar and cocoa powder.

CHOCOLATE MERINGUE MOUSSE CAKE

Adapted from *Simply Sensational Desserts* by François Payard

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR START TO FINISH: 1 DAY (INCLUDES CHILLING)

FOR MERINGUES

- **10 large egg whites**
- **1½ cups sugar**
- **1 cup Valrhona unsweetened cocoa powder (see Shopping List, page 131), sifted**

FOR FILLING

- **2 large eggs plus 1 large yolk**
- **⅓ cup sugar, divided**
- **1½ tablespoons water**
- **6 oz Valrhona chocolate (no more than 62% cacao if marked)**
- **1 cup chilled heavy cream**
- **3 tablespoons seedless raspberry jam**

EQUIPMENT: **a stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment; a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round pastry tip**

GARNISH: **confectioners sugar; cocoa powder**

MAKE MERINGUES: Preheat oven to 250°F with racks in upper and lower thirds. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Draw 3 (7- by 5-inch) ovals on 1 lined pan.
▸Whisk together egg whites and sugar in mixer bowl, then set bowl over a large saucepan of barely simmering water (bowl should not touch water) and heat whites, whisking constantly, until mixture is foamy and registers 122 to 125°F on an instant-read thermometer.
▸Beat whites with mixer until they hold stiff peaks. Remove bowl from mixer and sift cocoa powder over meringue, then fold in gently but thoroughly (mixture will deflate).
▸Transfer to pastry bag and, starting from center of each oval, pipe meringue in a tight spiral to fill ovals to outer edge. ▸Pipe as many 2½-inch-long strips (about ⅓ inch wide and ½ inch apart) as possible on second lined pan, slanting rows so more strips will fit.
▸Bake meringues, switching position of pans halfway through baking, until dry, crisp, and firm, 3 to 4 hours. (Meringues are done when they release from parchment.) ▸Slide parchment with meringues onto a rack to cool completely.

MAKE MOUSSE WHILE MERINGUES COOL: Whisk together eggs and yolk with 2 teaspoons sugar in a bowl. ▸Bring water and remaining sugar to a boil in a small heavy saucepan over medium heat, stirring until sugar has dissolved. Pour slowly into egg mixture, whisking, then return mixture to saucepan. ▸Cook over medium-low heat, whisking constantly, until mixture is very thick and eggs just begin to curdle on bottom of pan, about 2 minutes. Beat in cleaned mixer bowl (with cleaned whisk attachment) at high speed until mixture is doubled and cooled to room temperature, about 5 minutes.
▸Melt chocolate (see Tips, page 130), then remove from heat and cool to warm (about 105°F), stirring occasionally. ▸Meanwhile, whisk cream in a large bowl until it just holds soft peaks.
▸Fold chocolate into egg mixture, then quickly fold in whipped cream.

ASSEMBLE CAKE: Trim meringue ovals to same size. ▸Dab some mousse (to secure meringue) in center of a serving plate, then set 1 oval on top. Spread with about 1 cup mousse, then top with another oval. Spread with jam, then another cup of mousse, and top with remaining oval. Chill 15 minutes. (Do not chill remaining mousse.) Frost cake with remaining mousse, then gently press meringue strips diagonally around side of cake. Chop remaining strips and scatter on top. ▸Chill cake, loosely covered with plastic wrap, 8 to 24 hours. Let stand, covered, at room temperature 30 minutes before serving.

LAND RUSH

Continued from page 107

SCALLOPS WITH ONION PURÉE, PINK GRAPEFRUIT, AND PROSECCO BUTTER

Adapted from Eric Ferguson, Nick's Italian Cafe

SERVES 4 (MAIN COURSE)

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 1 HR

The secret ingredient in this dish is a surprisingly modest one: grapefruit. Its tartness balances the unashamed, almost swaggering richness of scallops bathed in a butter sauce.

- **¼ cup olive oil**
- **1 sweet onion (¾ lb) such as Vidalia, OsoSweet, or Walla Walla, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced**
- **1 pink grapefruit**
- **¾ cup Prosecco**
- **2 tablespoons minced shallot**
- **1 stick cold unsalted butter, cut into tablespoons, divided**
- **12 large sea scallops (about 1½ lb total), tough ligament from side discarded**
- **1 teaspoon vegetable oil**

GARNISH: chervil sprigs

▸Heat olive oil in a 2- to 3-quart heavy saucepan over medium-low heat until it shimmers, then cook onion, covered, over low heat, stirring occasionally, until wilted, about 10 minutes. Stir in ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until very tender but not colored, about 20 minutes more. (If onion begins to color, add 1 to 2 tablespoons of water as necessary during cooking.)
▸Purée onion in a blender until smooth (use caution when blending hot foods). Transfer to a bowl; keep warm, covered.
▸Cut ½ inch from top and bottom of grapefruit with a sharp knife, exposing fruit at both ends. Cut peel and pith from sides, then cut segments free from membranes. Cut segments into ⅓-inch dice and reserve.
▸Boil Prosecco and shallot in a small heavy saucepan until liquid is reduced to 1 to 2 tablespoons, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low, then whisk in 6 tablespoons butter, 1 tablespoon at a time, whisking constantly, adding each piece before previous one has completely melted, and lifting pan from heat occasionally to cool. Remove from heat; keep warm, covered.
▸Heat a dry 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat until very hot, at least 2 minutes. ▸Meanwhile, pat scallops dry and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. ▸Add vegetable oil to hot skillet, swirling to coat, then sear scallops without crowding, undisturbed, until undersides are well browned, about 3 minutes. Add remaining 2 tablespoons butter to skillet, swirling skillet (so butter helps release scallops), then turn scallops over and cook until just cooked through, about 1 minute more.
▸Spoon 2 tablespoons onion purée onto each of 4 plates, then top with scallops, browned sides up, and diced grapefruit. Drizzle with Prosecco butter.

COOKS' NOTE: Onion purée can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, uncovered, until cool, then covered. Reheat over low heat.

HOMAGE TO CATALONIA

Continued from page 28

today, more than ever, it is based on the seasons—those seasons being measured in weeks, not months.

When I visited the restaurant early last fall, for instance, the year's first really good wild mushrooms were appearing, so the menu offered cèpes in several forms (in a rice dish with salt cod and in a salad with pomegranate seeds and pine nuts, among other things); chanterelles sautéed, in typical Catalan fashion, in olive oil with minced garlic and parsley; and saffron milkcaps (*Lactarius deliciosus*) sautéed with fresh herbs. Mackerel was served both grilled with caper butter and in a *suquet*, a Catalan fish stew, with potatoes and the curious sea slugs, much appreciated locally, called *espardenyes*. It was prime season for line-caught local squid, given the same garlic-and-parsley treatment and lightly caramelized around the edges—wonderful. "They're perfect now," Subirós told me. "In a few weeks, they'll be too big."

Even the Cadaqués anchovies—something of an emblematic creature at the Hotel Empordà—might be said to be seasonal. Subirós cures his own, using plump, almost sweet-tasting little fish caught in late spring and then packed in salt with thyme and black peppercorns in wooden barrels, headless but with their spines in, and cured for at least four months (though they're good for about a year and a half). These go into *garum*, the herby tapenade-like olive-and-anchovy purée—invented by Mercader and inspired by the notorious fermented-fish paste of the same name favored by the ancient Romans—served here with little toasts as an *amuse-bouche* and also mixed into the steak tartare. They're also served by themselves, in olive oil, with rounds of bread smeared with tomato, and used in various dishes, including an improbably delicious salad with *mâche*, hazelnuts, and poached pears in orange vinaigrette, and a kind of mille-feuille with thin rounds of eggplant, meltingly soft, standing in for the pastry leaves, a dense tomato filling, and the anchovies coarsely puréed on top—a dish that is no beauty-contest winner but would place highly in any concourse of evocative Mediterranean cooking. Incidentally, if you ask nicely, and there are some available, you might also have the chance to try the anchovy spines—soaked in milk, floured, and deep-fried into an addictive little treat.

It was a week or two too early for wild game birds when I was at the Hotel Empordà, but Subirós was serving a savory substitute: roast squab in red-wine sauce, with its liver and other organs mashed into a rough-hewn, peppery pâté with some garlic-and-parsley risotto on the side. Other dishes on the menu included the exquisite large shrimp of Roses, simply boiled in seawater; a "*Tatin*" (upside-down tart) of long-cooked oxtail; and a dish that combined lean but juicy slices of braised calf's cheek with pieces of duck foie gras from a nearby farm.

"There has been a remarkable evolution locally in the last decade," says Subirós, "in wine, olive oil, cheese, many kinds of artisanal products." His well-chosen, reasonably priced wine list, for instance, includes not only bottles from all the major wine regions of Spain (as well as a good, small French selection and some token bottles from elsewhere, even Australia and California) but also more than 40 offerings from the little-known but up-and-coming Empordà *denominación*—among them such dazzlers as Danish-born Peter Sisseck's Clos d'Agon white, an elegant, mineral-edged blend of Viognier, Roussanne, and Marsanne; and the fruity Masia Carreras, made from Carignan and Grenache.

There has also been an evolution in clientele. "Our customers are younger than they used to be," says Subirós, "and they're genuinely interested in food. They make gastronomic voyages."

I mention that some of his customers seem *very* young; there are always children in the dining room. Subirós grins. "But that's our future," he says. "If they go to McDonald's, we have no future."

HOTEL EMPORDÀ
170 Avinguda Salvador Dalí, Figueres
011-34-972-500562

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CAVIAR AND SALMON BLINI TORTES

SERVES 2

ACTIVE TIME: 50 MIN START TO FINISH: 50 MIN

With sustainability in mind, we taste-tested a variety of domestic caviars. Trout roe had the pop and brininess we were looking for—and it was especially pretty.

FOR EGG SALAD

- **1 hard-boiled large egg, finely chopped**
- **2 tablespoons sour cream**
- **1 tablespoon finely chopped chives**

FOR BLINI

- **2 tablespoons buckwheat flour**
- **3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon sugar**
- **⅛ teaspoon baking soda**
- **⅛ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ cup whole milk**
- **1 large egg, separated**
- **½ stick unsalted butter, melted and cooled, divided**

FOR FILLING

- **¼ lb thinly sliced smoked salmon at room temperature**
- **2 oz trout caviar, such as rainbow-trout caviar (see Shopping List, page 131), or salmon roe**

GARNISH: sour cream; chopped chives

MAKE EGG SALAD: Stir together all ingredients and a pinch of salt.

MAKE BLINI: Whisk together dry ingredients in a bowl. Add milk and yolk and whisk until smooth.

▸Beat egg white with a clean whisk in another bowl until it just holds soft peaks. Fold into batter along with 2 tablespoons melted butter.

▸Brush a 12-inch nonstick skillet with some of remaining melted butter, then heat over medium heat until hot. Working in batches of 6 or 7, drop 1 level tablespoon batter per pancake into skillet and cook until bubbles appear on surface and undersides are golden, 45 seconds to 1 minute. Flip over and cook 1 minute more. Brush blini on both sides with some of remaining melted butter, then transfer to a plate and keep warm, covered with foil. Brush skillet with butter between batches.

FILL TORTES: Drape smoked salmon on 6 blini and top with egg salad. Spoon caviar onto 6 more blini, then stack on egg-salad-topped blini.

COOKS' NOTE: Egg salad can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered. Bring to cool room temperature before using.

RECIPE INDEX **FEBRUARY**

SEE KITCHEN NOTEBOOK, PAGE 123, FOR SPECIALTY INGREDIENTS IN THIS ISSUE.

COOKING TIPS

Measure liquids in glass or clear plastic liquid-measuring cups and **dry ingredients** in nesting dry-measuring cups that can be leveled off with a knife.
Measure flour by spooning (not scooping) it into a dry-measuring cup and leveling off with a knife; do not tap or shake cup.
Do not sift flour unless specified in recipe. If sifted flour is called for, sift before measuring. (Disregard "presifted" on the label.)
Salt: Measurements are for table salt unless otherwise specified.
Black pepper is always freshly ground.
Spices: Store away from heat and light; buy in small quantities.
Toast whole spices in a dry heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring, until fragrant and a shade darker, 3 to 5 minutes. **Toast nuts** in a shallow baking pan in a 350°F oven until golden, 5 to 15 minutes. **Toast seeds** either way.
Melt chocolate in a metal bowl set over barely simmering water, stirring; or microwave at low to medium power for short intervals (30 seconds or less; stir to check consistency).
Baking pans: We prefer light-colored metal. (If you are using dark metal, including nonstick, your baked goods may brown more, and the cooking times may be shorter. Lower oven temperature 25°F to compensate.)
Nonreactive cookware includes stainless steel, glass, and enameled cast iron; avoid pure aluminum and uncoated iron, which can impart an unpleasant taste and color to recipes with acidic ingredients.
Water bath for baking: Put filled pan in a larger pan and place in oven, then add enough boiling-hot water to reach halfway up side of smaller pan.
Produce: Wash and dry before using.
Greens and chopped/sliced leeks: Wash in a large bowl of water, agitating them, then lift out and drain.
Fresh herbs or greens: Use only the leaves and tender stems.
Citrus zest: Remove the colored part of the rind only (avoid the bitter white pith). For strips, use a vegetable peeler. For grating, we prefer a rasplike Microplane zester, which results in fluffier zest, so pack to measure.
Chiles: Wear protective gloves when handling.

HORS D'OEUVRES AND FIRST COURSES

MAIN COURSES

SIDE DISHES

VEGETARIAN

DESSERTS

BREAKFAST

MISCELLANEOUS

LEGEND
◷Recipes prepared in 30 minutes active time or less.

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SHOPPING LIST

FOOD

UP FIRST Page 129: Domestic caviar—Sunburst Trout Company (800-673-3051). **VEGETARIAN TONIGHT Page 54: Quinoa**—many supermarkets and natural foods stores. **THE SPICE IS RIGHT Page 92: Atta flour**—Middle Eastern and Asian markets and Kalustyan's (212-685-3451). **Page 99: Aleppo pepper flakes**, **Middle Eastern rose water**, **almond flour**, and **green cardamom pods**—Kalustyan's. **SWEET SOLACE Page 121: Semolina**—specialty foods shops and Italian markets. **KITCHEN NOTEBOOK Page 124: Valrhona cocoa powder** and **chocolate**—specialty foods shops and farawayfoods.com.

OTHER THINGS

GOURMET EVERY DAY Page 47: "Nadia" glasses—Juliska (888-414-8448). **Page 53: Cast-iron 10-inch frying pan** by Dahlström for iittala Hackman—FinnStyle (866-617-6176). **Page 57: No. 89 flatware**—Pott (888-666-6004). **THE SPICE IS RIGHT Page 94: Bowl**—Takashimaya (212-350-0100). **Page 96: Bowl**—DeVine Corporation (732-751-0500). **SUNDAY SUPPER Pages 108–109: All plates** by Calvin Klein—Macy's (800-289-6229). **Gray men's sweater**—Tse (917-606-6700). **Page 110: Fork** by Muriel Grateau—Trillium (508-228-4450). **Knife**—James Robinson (212-752-6166). **Pan** by Mario Batali—Crate & Barrel (800-967-6696).

GOOD LIVING STATISTICAL SOURCES

Page 35: Left to right, top to bottom: Pez; BBC; *Encyclopedia Britannica; Carnaval* by Haroldo Costa; *Straight Up or On the Rocks: The Story of the American Cocktail* by William Grimes; *Medieval Holidays and Festivals* by Madeleine Pelner Cosman; BBC.

COMING NEXT MONTH

COUNTRY FRENCH ISSUE

- A luxurious Provençal Easter dinner
- The perfect French omelet
- A hearty, elegant (and fabulous) menu from Alsace
- All your favorite bistro dishes, from pot-au-feu to profiteroles
- The most exciting region of France (with the best wines) that you've never heard about
- Baking lessons from a pastry wizard
- Visit the towns in Normandy where the best bread in France is made
- Who doesn't love butter plus sugar? Easy recipes highlight their magic

SUNDAY SUPPER

Continued from page 112

DEVIL DOG CAKE

SERVES 6 WITH LEFTOVERS

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 2½ HR

This cake was inspired by Devil Dogs, the bone-shaped chocolate cakes with irresistible white goo sandwiched between their layers. You'll want to dive headfirst into this version, a tall layer of moist, dark devil's food with fluffy marshmallow frosting.

FOR CAKE

2 cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (not Dutch-process) plus additional for dusting
1¼ teaspoons baking soda
¾ teaspoon salt
2 sticks unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups packed dark brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1⅓ cups water

FOR FROSTING

2 large egg whites
½ cup sugar
¼ cup light corn syrup
2 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

MAKE CAKE: Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in middle. Butter and flour an 8-inch square cake pan (2 inches deep). ▸Whisk together flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt. ▸Beat together butter and brown sugar with an electric mixer until pale and fluffy. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well, then beat in vanilla. Add flour mixture and water alternately in batches, beginning and ending with flour mixture and mixing until just combined. ▸Pour batter into cake pan and smooth top, then bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 55 minutes. Cool in pan on a rack 1 hour. Transfer cake to a cake plate.

MAKE FROSTING: Combine frosting ingredients with a pinch of salt in a metal bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water and beat with a handheld electric mixer at high speed until frosting is thick and fluffy, 6 to 7 minutes. Remove bowl from heat and continue to beat until slightly cooled. Mound frosting on top of cake. Dust with additional cocoa powder.

COOKS' NOTES: Cake, without frosting, will improve in flavor if made 1 day ahead. Cool, then keep, wrapped in plastic wrap, at room temperature. Frost cake just before serving.
• The egg whites in the frosting are not fully cooked. You can substitute pasteurized or reconstituted dried egg whites if salmonella is a problem in your area.

THE LAST TOUCH

Batter Up! Sophisticated waffles with cardamom and sour cream, pancakes with chocolate chips—novel takes on morning staples will have 'em jumping out of bed. RECIPES BY ANDREA ALBIN

RICE WAFFLES

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup cooked rice (preferably day-old)
- 1½ cups milk
- 1 large egg, separated
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

▸Preheat a waffle iron until hot. ▸Whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt, then mix in rice with your fingertips. Stir in milk, yolk, and butter until just combined. Whisk egg white until it just holds stiff peaks, then fold into batter gently but thoroughly. ▸Lightly brush waffle iron with oil and cook waffles according to manufacturer's instructions.

CARDAMOM SOUR-CREAM WAFFLES

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- Rounded ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon mild honey
- 2 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

ACCOMPANIMENT: lingonberry preserves
GARNISH: confectioners sugar

▸Preheat a waffle iron until hot.
▸Whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cardamom.
▸Whisk together remaining ingredients in another bowl, then whisk into flour mixture until just combined. ▸Lightly brush waffle iron with oil and cook waffles according to manufacturer's instructions.

ORANGE CHOCOLATE CHIP PANCAKES

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1¼ cups milk
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1½ teaspoons grated orange zest
- 1 rounded cup semisweet mini chocolate chips

ACCOMPANIMENT: 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened, mixed with 3 tablespoons orange marmalade

▸Whisk together all ingredients except chips until just combined.
▸Heat a griddle over medium heat until hot and lightly brush with additional oil. Working in batches, pour a scant ¼ cup batter per pancake onto griddle and sprinkle each pancake with about 1½ teaspoons chips. Cook until bubbles appear on surface and undersides are golden-brown, about 1 minute. Flip with a spatula and cook other side, about 1 minute more. (Lightly oil griddle between batches.)

WHOLE-WHEAT OATMEAL PANCAKES

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

- ¾ cup quick-cooking oats
- 1½ cups plus 2 tablespoons well-shaken buttermilk, divided
- ¾ cup whole-wheat flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon grated nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar

ACCOMPANIMENT: sliced bananas

▸Soak oats in ¾ cup buttermilk 10 minutes.
▸Meanwhile, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a large bowl. ▸Stir egg, butter, brown sugar, remaining ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons buttermilk, and oat mixture into dry ingredients until just combined.
▸Heat a griddle over medium heat until hot and lightly brush with oil. Working in batches, pour ¼ cup batter per pancake onto griddle and cook until bubbles appear on surface and undersides are golden-brown, about 1 minute. Flip with a spatula and cook other side, about 1 minute more. (Lightly oil griddle between batches.)

For a CORNMEAL PANCAKES recipe, visit gourmet.com.



ROMULO YANES FOOD STYLING: PAUL GRIMES PROP STYLING: HALEY THURSHWELL